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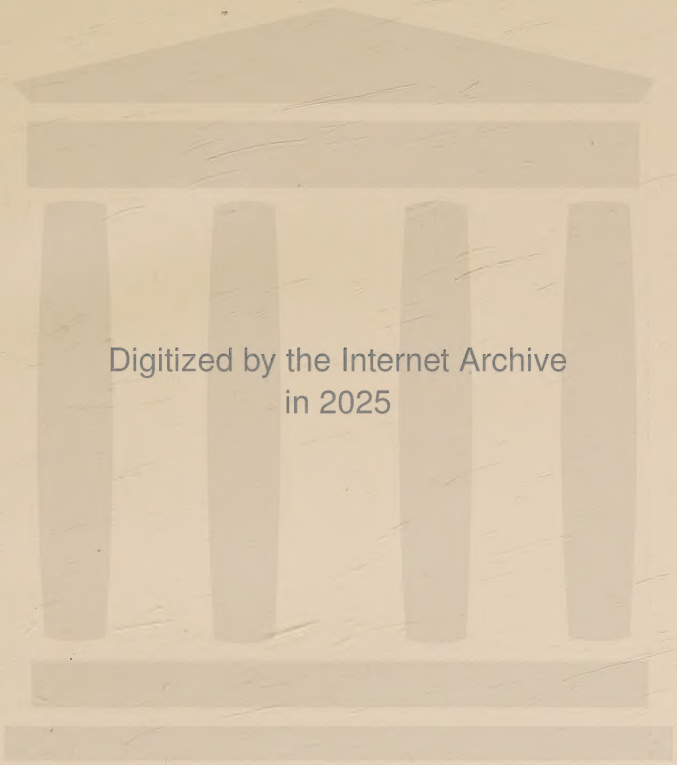

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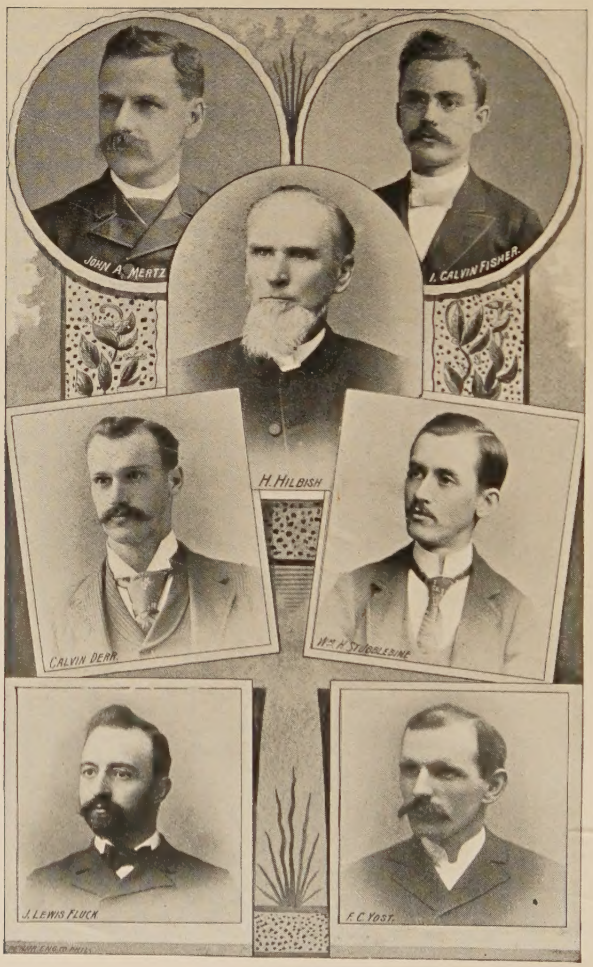

PRESENT PASTORS OF THE REFORMED CHURCHES IN CHESTER COUNTY.

A HISTORY

OF THE

Reformed Churches

IN CHESTER COUNTY

COMPILED AND EDITED BY

J. LEWIS FLUCK

Pastor of St. Matthew's and St. Paul's Reformed Churches
Anselma, Pa.

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TO THE MEMBERS OF

THE REFORMED CHURCHES IN CHESTER COUNTY

AND

TO THE FRIENDS WHO HAVE SO KINDLY AIDED
IN ITS PREPARATION,

THIS WORK IS HUMBLY DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

The first efforts in preparing a history of the Reformed Churches in Chester County date back to 1879. At this time J. Smith Futhey and Gilbert Cope were collecting data for their general history of Chester county, published in 1881. The sketches in this book contained but meagre outlines of the beginnings, rise and progress of these churches, still, they were generally read with a great deal of interest and satisfaction.

Among those directly interested, either by past or present connection with the churches, there seemed to be a desire for sketches going more into detail. Accordingly, in 1889, Captain A. Fetters, of Edgefield, commenced to write a series of historical sketches based upon such of the old records as were accessible. These were published in "Our Banner," begin-

ning with January, 1889, and apparently read with increased interest.

Believing that their publication in a permanent form would be a means of preserving the old records, and, therefore, a service to the historical interests of the church, the present work was undertaken in the spring of 1891.

In preparing this work for the press, we have again gone over the whole field. The material was largely taken from old records, though we have not hesitated to take it from other sources where they seemed reliable. In some sketches there are periods not very fully elaborated for want of material. We preferred to leave the gap open rather than fill it with matter of doubtful accuracy. We have aimed at accuracy first, and completeness as far as it was possible.

We gladly acknowledge our indebtedness to Rev. Henry Hilbish, pastor of Brownback's; Rev. W. H. Stubblebine, of Shenkel's; Rev. J. A. Mertz, of St. Vincent; Rev. Calvin Derr, of Spring City; Rev. I. Calvin Fisher, of East Vincent and Pikeland; and Rev. F. C. Yost, of Phœnixville, for their valuable aid in collecting and arranging the historical data of the churches with which they stand related. With the same pleasure we acknowledge the valuable help received from

pastoral reminiscences furnished us by Rev. A. B. Shenkle, of Millersville, Pa.

To Captain A. Fetters, of Edgefield, we are indebted for the history of St. Peter's (Warwick), as well as for the entire financial support which made possible the publication of this work in its present attractive form.

Anselma, Pa.,
March 15, 1892.

CONTENTS.

PAGE.

Introduction 13

Brownback's Reformed Church 16

East Vincent Reformed Church 32

St. Peter's Reformed Church (Pikeland) 44

St. Peter's Reformed Church (Warwick) 51

St. Matthew's Reformed Church 59

St. Vincent Reformed Church 73

St. Paul's Reformed Church 83

Shenkel's Reformed Church 97

St. John's Reformed Church, Phœnixville 107

First Reformed Church, Spring City 113

"Sunnyside" 71

"Fairview" 123

Biographical sketches of pastors since 1850 125

Appendix 141

THE REFORMED CHURCHES

IN CHESTER COUNTY.

INTRODUCTION.

Reverence for sacred places is as old as the religious instinct in man. The devout heart loves to cherish associations which cluster around the places of its communion with God. In the history of ancient nations, far back beyond where all other land-marks have ceased, there stand the temple and the altar, around which are gathered all we know of that period of their existence. Even among Pagan nations, that which was associated with their religion, has been best preserved in their traditions; these glimmer farthest back into the morning twilight of their annals. "While their thrones, their capitols, their laws and their pageantry of state, have, to a great extent, vanished, so that their places are scarcely known, their temples, their altars, their gods, their religious doctrines, services and songs, have been faithfully preserved and transmitted, amid the ruinous changes which time has wrought, through many hoary centuries." So, likewise, among the Jewish nation we find this same ardor of devotion to sacred places, only increased in intensity. The places where God revealed himself in dreams and visions is the spot where the patriarchs built their altars, where the tribes built their tabernacles, and where the nation built its temple and its holy city. No gift was too

costly, no labor too burdensome, no devotion too exacting, if thereby the Jew could adorn and make memorable, for ages to come, the place where he worshipped the God of his fathers. Travellers tell us that to this day the Jews of Palestine and pilgrims to the Holy City pay tribute to Mohammedans for permission to approach and kiss the ruins of the ancient temple; and pressing their foreheads against its foundation walls, they wail in mournful tones: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

Such is the strength and beauty of sacred attachment, and should not we respond to its appeals by showing an intelligent interest in that past, which brought to us the privileges of the present? Shall we forget our fathers and their history? Shall we possess the inheritance which their pains have gathered—shall we worship in the temples which their hands have reared—shall we pass by the silent and solemn graves in which their ashes rest, without inquiring into their history, doing honor to their memory, and stirring up our hearts with gratitude towards God, that our lines have fallen into such pleasant places, and that we have been made the possessors of so goodly a heritage?

The history of these congregations is, moreover, the spiritual history of our ancestors in the faith. Here is where beloved parents and grand-parents, and in some

instances, great-grand-parents came to worship God on the Sabbath day. What hallowed associations of affection, of friendship and of worship cluster around these holy places! Other buildings have been erected, other surroundings created, one generation has laid another to rest in the adjoining graveyard; but while these changes indicate the transient character of all things temporal and mortal, they draw us closer to the place where last scenes were witnessed, where last farewells were given, and where the heart still dwells in yearning love over the remains of its sacred dead.

As to the part which these combined influences play in the redeeming actions of the world, this cannot, in the nature of things, be a matter of record. The church's most becoming attitude on this point is silence. Of the work she hath done and the good she hath wrought, others must speak through lives ennobled, affections purified, character enriched and purpose elevated. Let every reader of these sketches be stirred up to greater activity in the Lord's work, so that from these temples of light shall go forth a steady current of sanctifying influence to heal and bless and raise a world afflicted with sin.

BROWNBACK'S REFORMED CHURCH,

EAST COVENTRY TOWNSHIP.

As the history of this church dates back to a very early period, it would no doubt be interesting to the reader if we call his attention to the moral and political condition of the times in which this congregation had its birth. Brownback's Church, with many others in eastern Pennsylvania, was born in Revolutionary times—times that tried the souls of all who came to these western shores, to seek a home for themselves and their children. Many came to this country in those years of the Revolution. Some were outspoken advocates of American Independence, while others persisted in their allegiance to the King of Great Britain. Even the ministry of those days was divided on the political questions of the times.

It was in the midst of this babel of thought that this church was beginning its religious history.

The religious condition of the German people of Pennsylvania was deplorable. The wildest forms of fanaticism were rampant, while the great body of the people, disgusted by these extravagances, and destitute of proper means of religious instruction, was fast falling into a condition of hopeless irreligion and unbelief.

BROWNBACK'S REFORMED CHURCH.

It is not surprising that under these circumstances some of the best of the Germans should have looked around for some means by which to bring about a better state of things, and thus promote a spirit of unity among Christians, and, at the same time, present a strong front to the attacks of the enemy.

Dr. Dubbs, in his Historic Manual of the Reformed Church in the United States, says: "In December, 1741, Henry Antes, Count Zinzendorf and others, issued a call for a meeting of those who could give a reason for the faith that was in them, to be held in Germantown, on New Years day. The plan of union elaborated at these meetings was called 'The Congregation of God in the Spirit.' It was understood that every one might retain his denominational peculiarities, while at the same time he stood in connection with a higher unity. There was, it seems, no intention of destroying the Lutheran, Reformed and other churches as religious denominations, but they were to be united by means of the confederation of those who had reached the highest grade of spiritual perception. The idea was not to establish a sect, but to some it appeared beautiful that there should be within the church a community of elect souls who would more and more withdraw themselves from worldly affairs to live a life like that of the angels in heaven."

This movement seemed at first to prove successful, but as all wild and irregular movements are apt to carry men beyond the bounds of propriety, so in this

case this compact now in an irregular way proceeded to ordain ministers for the Lutheran and Reformed churches. In this way a number of men were ordained, among them the Rev. Jacob Lischey, who afterwards became the first pastor of this congregation.

The community in which Brownback's church is located was first settled by Germans. Some came from the Palatinate, but, as the documents show, the greater part came from Switzerland.

The care which they exercised in the selection of their first pastor shows that they were men of faith and piety. The church, they plainly saw, needed a minister who had the love of souls at heart; a man well founded in Christian doctrine; one who stood entirely aloof from the schismatic influences that prevailed to an alarming extent at this time in the various counties surrounding the city of Philadelphia; hence they demanded of Rev. Lischey, that, before he could be elected as their pastor, he must give them a full and complete outline or declaration of his faith with regard to the cardinal doctrines of the Christian religion. In accordance with the wishes of this people this declaration was carefully written and sent on the 19th day of May, 1743. The document is too lengthy for translation, but we would here state that it is a piece of writing that indicates no small amount of scholarship, and at the same time shows a broad catholic spirit—a spirit of love and consecration to God and the Holy Gospel he was to preach. This

declaration seemed to find general approval on the part of this God-fearing and God-loving people, as is indicated by the following call sent to the Rev. Jacob Lischey, of which we here give a translation:

"To the Rev. Jacob Lischey:

"Inasmuch as you have, according to our wish and prayer, given us a written declaration as to the manner and spirit in which you would serve us as pastor, as well as of your faith in the cardinal doctrines of the Gospel of Christ, we find that you are actuated from pure and proper motives. Especially, are we pleased to learn that it is your sincere purpose to preach none other to us but Jesus Christ as the only sure foundation of our holy religion; and that in the clear and plain presentation of divine truth you seek the salvation of our souls and that of our children. With this declaration we are well satisfied, and we now invite you in the name of God, and of his son, Jesus Christ, 'the Great Shepherd of souls,' to become our pastor, to preach to us the wholesome doctrines of Christ and his apostles, and to administer to us and to our families, for our blessing and comfort, the holy sacraments.

"In witness whereof we hereby subscribe our names with a whole heart this 19th day of May, A. D., 1743: Philip Breitenstein, Johannes Schroder, Johannes Frey, Nicholas Coerper, Christian Strohm, Velten Scheidecker, Conrad Reeffior, Johannes Paul, Henrich Freys, Friederich Mueller, Adam Stein, Lorentz Poffenboce, Michael Isnoy, Simon Schreck, Jacob Corl, Johannes Neydic, Casper Buechnen, Conrad Walther, Heinrich Muellen, Melchior Koch, Samuel Esch, Adam Schoett, Henrich Buehr, Gerhart Brumbach (Brownback), Heinrich Boehner, Johannes Corl, Johannes Hubel, Conrad Seibert, Friederich Funck, Jacob Freyman, Johannes Clauer, Albertis Ehrenwein, Wilhelm Adam, Rudolph Baeher."

At this early period there was no church building. The worship was held in private houses for a number of years. Afterwards a school house was erected, and public worship held in it until the year 1750.

This church was really organized in the city of Philadelphia, May 19, 1743, and a constitution formulated which reads as follows, viz.:

"There shall six elders be nominated by the minister, and elected by a majority of votes, who are of respectable standing, and amongst the whole congregation, of a good report.

ART. 1. Carefully to watch over the whole congregation, and to have strict oversight over each member in particular.

ART. 2. They must make known without respect to person everything that is unbecoming, which they see and discover in the one or the other member. This they are to do in this manner: First, they are to make it known to the minister alone; secondly, to the minister and other elders; thirdly, to the whole congregation. If the first and second admonitions prove fruitless, they are to be excluded from the church, so that no impenitent sinner may be tolerated in the church, and that through them no weak member may be offended.

ART. 3. They must see that there be good order and management, and that sound and pure doctrine be maintained. Wherefore, they shall, in the fourth place, frequently consult with the minister particularly when anything occurs in the congregation, meet with him to consider impending subjects in order to seek and to promote the welfare of the congregation.

ART. 5. The elders and the ministers shall hold consistorial meetings among themselves every time before the administration of the Lord's Supper, in which they must bear testimony, according to their conscience and their knowledge, of each member; when each one according to the best judgment of the min-

ister and his elders may be admitted or rejected, inasmuch as the consistory has power not only to keep from the Lord's table all sinners who give offense to the congregation, but also to excommunicate them from the church until they show amendment of life. It is therefore necessary that all who intend to commune will give in their names, after the sermon, one Sabbath before the administering of the Lord's Supper, that there may be time to consult in regard to the case of each member, inasmuch as by reason of our discipline (not any are without exception), as has been the custom, none can be admitted to the Lord's table but those who have a just conception of the important fundamentals of religion, as well as a true hunger and thirst after Christ; that no openly known wicked and hardened sinners enter with the communicants, and thus, through their impenitence, bring the wrath of God upon themselves, and upon the whole congregation.

Wherefore in particular young people, as much as possible, should be taught and instructed; therefore it shall be the duty of all parents and heads of families in our church to see that their children and those under their care be diligently trained up to this, and suffer no opportunity to be lost, by which they may grow in knowledge and increase in the love of the Lord, and thus build on the most sure and holy foundation, to which the elders shall see and shall take lead in the congregation with a good example. For the preservation of the church, the things required in it, as bread and wine in the administering of the Lord's Supper, there shall every time, at the end of divine service, be a regular collection taken, when each member shall contribute voluntarily and according to circumstances.

Further, the youngest of the elders shall take care of the money for one year, while another of the elders shall keep a regular account of what was contributed, so that settlement may be made semi-annually before the congregation. Nothing shall be paid out without the knowledge and consent of the whole congregation.

Given in Philadelphia, May 19, A. D., 1743.

This discipline was adopted and signed by the following persons: Philip Breitenstein, Henry Steeger, John Shœnholtz, Nicholas Coerper, John Sholter, John Frey, Christian Strohm, Conrad Walter, Henry Miller, Gerhart Brownback, Henry Bœner, Valentine Sheldecker, Conrad Ression, Elder Michael Thaney, Elder Simon Shunk, Jacob Carl, John Neidig, Casper Benner, Jacob Freyman, John Paul, Henry Fries, Malchia Koch, John Carl, Samuel Ash, John Zuber, John Clower, Conrad Seibert, Albert Ehrenwein, Adam Stein, Frederick Miller, Henry Boer, Adam Shott, Rudolph Boer, Wm. Adam, Frederick Funk, Lorentz Phaffenbach.

The Rev. Jacob Lischey commenced his labors soon after he received his call from this people. Precisely how long he ministered to this congregation cannot be told, as there are no records at hand, but it is presumed that he ministered to the people in word and doctrine for the space of four years. From here he moved to York county, Pa., and became pastor among the early Germans who had settled in that county. After having labored here for a number of years it seems he espoused the doctrine of Emanuel

Swedenborg, and was finally deposed from the ministry by the Coetus with which he had united in 1748.

He died in Codorus township, York county, Pa., in 1781, and is buried near the Reformed Church that is still known by the name of "Lischey's church."

The next pastor was the Rev. Christopher Munz (*Mancius*). There is no record of his labors, nor of the time of his death. Dr. Dubbs, in his Necrology, says, that "in 1757 Coetus made a gift to his widow, otherwise unknown."

The congregation, having largely increased in numbers, resolved in the year 1749 to erect a church. The land for church and graveyard was donated by Gerhart Brownback, who settled about the year 1725 in this immediate neighborhood. He became the parent of a numerous offspring, many of whom are still living, and are taking an active part in church work, as well as educational matters. It is from this early date that this church became known as "Brownback's Reformed Church, of East Coventry township."

From a history written by Frederick Sheeder in 1846 we find the following: "The first log church here was build about 1750." He says that he was in it in the winter of 1793 and 1794. It was of logs, one and a-half story with gallery, broken roof, two four-light windows at each gable end, and two of the same size in the roof at each side, to light the gallery and pulpit. The lower story had twelve-light windows.

To this church, after its completion, the Rev. John

Philip Leydick was called. He was sent to America by the Synod of South Holland, and on his arrival began his ministry at Falkner Swamp, in Montgomery county, Pa., and at the same time supplied this church with the stated preaching of the Gospel. How long he continued pastor at Brownback's church we are not able to say. He died January 4, 1784, aged 68 years.

In 1784, soon after the death of the former pastor, the Rev. Frederick Dallicker became pastor. He served this congregation, in connection with Faulkner Swamp, the same as his predecessor. There is no doubt but what this ministry continued until his death, which took place January 15, 1799, aged 60 years.

In 1800 the old log church, which did service for about half a century, was taken down, and a stone building erected in its stead. At the same time the grave-yard was enlarged by a donation of a parcel of ground given to the congregation for that purpose by John Longacker.

After this new church was built, and at the consecration, the Rev. Frederick L. Herman came to officiate. This ministry continued until 1821. He died at Upper Hanover, Montgomery county, Pa., January 30, 1848, aged 86 years.

During the latter years of his ministry among this people, there were some who began to see the necessity of having English services, as a transition from German to English had fully set in. As the present pastor was born in Germany, and had never officiated

in the English language, he called his son, the Rev. Frederick Herman, Jr., who was pastor at New Holland, Lancaster county, to supply them with English services, which he faithfully did until the close of his father's ministry in 1821. From 1821 until 1840, Rev. John C. Guldin, son-in-law of Rev. F. L. Herman, was pastor, and in connection with this church he preached also at St. Matthew's, West Vincent, East Vincent, St. Peter's, Warwick, and Shenkle's churches. He was a forcible speaker, an earnest expounder of God's word. Often under his soul-searching sermons the people wept. This is the testimony of the few who are still living, and who were members of his flock. In those days, King Alcohol had full sway, the motto of many of the well-meaning people of those times was, "schnapps ist eine gabe Gottes, darum sollte es mit danksagung empfangen sein" (ardent spirits is a gift of God, therefore should be received with thanksgiving).

Yet in those times when few dared to raise their voice against the evil of strong drink, Rev. Guldin took a fearless and bold stand against an evil that was destroying the happiness as well as the souls of thousands; and by his earnest sermons and lectures on temperance aroused the popular feeling, which finally resulted in the organization of a temperance society, the membership of which at one time numbered three hundred and fifty-two. The following is the pledge of the society, which we here insert at the request of

a few of its friends, so that it may go down as a matter of history for the use of incoming generations:

At a large and respectable meeting of the inhabitants of Coventry township, Chester county, Pa., held in Brownback's Church, on Saturday evening, February 28th, A. D., 1835, the Rev. J. C. Guldin, Rev. Henry Miller, Dr. Robert May and J. Evans, delivered addresses on the subject of temperance. Afterwards the meeting proceeded to consider and adopt the following preamble and resolutions, viz.:

WHEREAS, the use of ardent spirits as a drink is an evil extensively ruinous to the human race, destroying the peace and happiness of many families, spreading misery and desolation throughout the land, costing a vast amount of money, increasing public expense, as well as producing a great amount of poverty—

Therefore, *Resolved*, That we form ourselves into a society for the purpose of promoting temperance, and that we adopt a constitution as the basis of our future operations.

PLEDGE.

We whose names are hereunto subscribed, believing that the drinking of ardent spirits for persons in health is not only unnecessary, but injurious, Do, therefore, hereby pledge ourselves to abstain entirely from *taking inwardly* any kind of intoxicating drinks, except in extreme cases when it may be found *really* necessary; and that we will not procure the article to be used in any other way by our families, nor by persons in our employ; that we will not traffic in the article, but that we will in all suitable ways discourage the use of it in the community.

A few of the signers and workers in the cause are still living. Their names are as follows: Daniel Benner, Henry Prizer, Peter Brower, Joseph Francis, Daniel Hoffman, Albert Simpson, Ameriah Scheeleigh,

Abigail Scheeleigh, Elizabeth Scheeleigh, Eliza Defrane, and Sophia B. Buckwalter.

Rev. Guldin lived in a parsonage bought for that purpose by the congregation. It is located only a short distance east of the church and is now the property of Hiram Detwiler. His ministry continued from 1821 until 1840, and from all indications was a fruitful one; "though dead, yet still he speaketh." He died in New York City, February 18, 1863, aged about 63 years.

From 1840 to 1855 several persons served as pastors—Revs. Honger, Andrew Young, J. S. Foulke, L. D. Leberman and David Heffelfinger. Rev. L. D. Leberman is still living, and is located in Philadelphia. Rev. Heffelfinger was pastor of this charge from 1848 to 1855. He died at Fayettville, Pa., July 23, 1860, aged about 44 years.

Between the ministry of the Rev. J. C. Guldin and that of Rev. Honger, the third church was built, being about the year 1850. A great many of those still living remember this church. It was built according to the style of architecture common in Eastern and Central Pennsylvania. This church stood until 1879, when it was replaced by the present pleasing and commodious structure.

In 1855 the Rev. William Sorber was called to the pastorate composed of Brownback's, Shenkle's, and St. Peter's churches. His ministry dates from June 22, 1855. This ministry seems to have been more

fruitful than any of the preceding. The records of the church show that there was a gradual growth from year to year throughout his entire ministry, which extended over a period of twenty-three years. All those living bear testimony to his faithfulness in and out of the pulpit, as well as the general care he manifested in developing the spiritual progress of his people. "Many shall rise and call him *blessed* in the resurrection of the just." Rev. Sorber closed his fruitful ministry December 7, 1878, and lies buried in the beautiful cemetery adjoining Brownback's church.

The Rev. George S. Sorber, son of the preceding, having now completed his collegiate and theological course at Ursinus College, was called immediately after the death of his father. His ministry began in 1879 and continued until January, 1886, when he resigned in order to accept a call from Watsontown, where he is at this date, a beloved and acceptable pastor.

The above ministry was a successful one in many respects, not only in gathering in new members and confirming them in the true faith through the earnest and faithful preaching of God's word, but under this ministry was also planned and erected the beautiful church which is shown by the engraving. The present edifice was erected in 1879; the corner-stone was laid on the 29th day of July of that year. The following ministers took part in the services: Revs. H. W. Super, D. D., L. D. Stambaugh and G. S. Sorber,

of the Reformed Church; Revs. J. F. Hartman, W. Weaver and H. Cook, of the Lutheran Church; G. W. Lybrand of the M. E. Church, and Rev. Barrows of the Baptist Church.

When the question of church building was proposed, it seems the people were of two different opinions. Some were for remodeling the old building, while others were strongly in favor of a new building more in harmony with the times. In order to test the matter, two subscriptions were circulated, one for remodeling the old building, the other for an entire new church. When these subscriptions were compared, it was found that by far the larger amount stood in favor of a new church. To this all finally agreed.

Those who gave liberally toward this new enterprise, and who took an active part in collecting subscriptions, were: Jesse Brownback, Lewis Brownback and wife, William Davis, Daniel Benner, W. R. Beans, J. F. Sheeder, David Wanger, Henry Miller, Irwin Brownback, H. M. Stauffer, Henry R. Kulp, Mahlon Kein, and many others of which we have no record at hand.

The Rev. George S. Sorber, having closed his ministry on January 31, 1886, the congregation called student J. W. Meminger, who had completed his course at Ursinus College, to become pastor. The call was accepted, and he entered on his duties about June 1, 1886. This pastorate continued only for one year, Rev. Meminger having received a call from St.

Paul's Church, Lancaster, and being strongly urged to accept the same, he closed his ministry in Brownback's charge at the close of his first year. The people were very loath to part with their pastor, as they had only learned to love him and to appreciate his services.

On June 3, 1888, Rev. A. D. Wolfinger was installed pastor. His ministry continued until May, 1890, when he accepted a call to Thornville, Ohio, and removed there shortly afterward.

On the 19th of March, 1891, the present pastor, the Rev. H. Hilbish, was unanimously elected, and a call extended to him. The same was accepted, and he entered upon his duties on the 1st day of May following. This pastorate, so far as we can tell, has been pleasant, both on the part of the pastor, and that of the people. In the first nine months of this ministry twenty-nine persons were added to the membership.

This congregation has always been active and enterprising in church work. The Sunday-school interest, the missionary interest, as well as the educational interests of the church, have received a liberal share of support.

The Sunday-school interest dates back many years. Having no old records before us, we are not able to give its rise and progress, but some of the older members remember that a Sunday-school was held over fifty years ago. The superintendents in later years were Peter Brower, Frederick Sheeder, Jr., A. B.

Stauffer, John H. Kulp, and Herman Prizer, who is serving at this time with great acceptance.

In closing this historical sketch, we will call your attention to only one other item—that of the music of this congregation. The first organ was dedicated on Sunday evening, October 1, 1871; Eli M. Root of Shenkle's Church presided at the organ. On November 5, 1871, Mary Ada Stauffer was elected organist, and filled that position for nine years. From 1880 to 1885, Miss Laura Sorber and Miss Lizzie Sheeleigh presided at the organ. From that period to the present, Miss Bella Prizer has filled the place, and with general satisfaction.

The official board in office at this time are the following: Elders, Daniel Benner, David Wanger, John Detwiler, Mahlon Kein, Amos Heistand and William Carl. Deacons, John Miller, Irwin Brownback, A. B. Stauffer, Moses H. Grubb, William H. Wiand and Washington F. Shantz.

EAST VINCENT REFORMED CHURCH.

The earliest historic records extant concerning the East Vincent Reformed Church, style it the "Reformed Congregation of Vincent Township beyond the Schuylkill." Although the erection of the first church building dates back to but the year 1758, the congregation had, nevertheless, been organized as early as the year 1744, and worshipped conjointly with the Lutherans in Zion's church. This was continued until the membership of both congregations was so large that it became a potent necessity to separate. To this both congregations assented, and the Reformed people sold out their invested right to the Lutherans for the sum of twenty pounds.

Notwithstanding the fact that the organization dates back but to the year 1744, there is a well-preserved baptismal record dating back as far as 1733.

Among those whose baptisms are recorded up to the time of the erection of the first church building in 1750 are the following: Barbara Schönholz, Martin John Schönholz, Jacob Schönholz, Catharine Schönholz, Elizabeth Schönholz, Anna Maria Schunck, Conrad Schunck, Catharine Elizabeth Schunck, Elizabeth Wagner, Anna Maria Wagner, John Schneider, Cath-

arine Schneider, Jacob Schneider, John Schönholz, Anna Maria Hipple, Anna Margaret Schunck, Elizabeth Stegers, Sebastian Wagner, Jr., Simon Schunck, John Wagner, Eva Elizabeth Helwig, John Hippel, Anna Maria Schneider, Jacob Seivert, Catharine Seivert, Henry Hipple, Henry Laubach, Isaac Schunck, Catharine Schneider, Maria Catharine Braun, Anna Catharine Steger, Anna Maria Iaeger, Jacob Hipple, Magdalena Hipple, Anna Maria Laubach, John Müller, Barbara Benner.

The first church building was erected during the fall of 1757 and during the winter of 1758. Very little is known of this building; no more than that it was located in the southeastern part of the old cemetery, and was built of logs in full harmony with the colonial style. This house of worship was divinely set apart to the worship of the Triune God on May 27, 1758, by its first pastor, the Rev. John Philip Leydick. The consistory of the congregation at this time consisted of Sebastian Wagner, Sr., Simon Schunck, John Schönholz, Thomas Schneider, Lorentz Hipple.

This building remained from 1758 to 1812. During this time there were 650 persons baptized and 290 confirmed. The first marriage recorded in the annals of this congregation was solemnized on April 27, 1784 —"George Hirsch, son of Philip Hirsch, of Vincent township, to Anna Maria Andre, daughter of Philip Andre, of Pikeland township." This marriage was

solemnized by the Rev. Frederic Dällicker, *Rev. Leydick's successor. Rev. Dällicker was pastor from 1784 to 1799. He was succeeded by Rev. Frederick Harman, the latter being pastor until 1821.

The first church was a witness of Revolutionary times. In common with Uwchlan Friends' Meeting-House at Lionville, and Zion's Lutheran Church on the Ridge on Nutt's road, it was used as a hospital during the pestilence which broke out among Washington's army, in camp at Valley Forge in the winter of 1777–'78. It is stated by earlier writers that both Pikeland and East Vincent churches were visible from Valley Forge at that time. Gen. Washington, whose heart was with his men, frequently visited these hospitals, and while at the one on the Ridge road, his headquarters were at an old log house on the farm recently occupied by George Snyder, within sight of the church. Many of those quartered in the church died of this fever. Twenty-two are buried in ground then belonging to Henry Hipple, Sr., near East Vincent church. No name is carved to tell us who they were. We only know that they died for their country. In 1831 the Military Volunteer Association of Chester County, enclosed the plot of ground where they were buried, and erected a monument to their memory. The monument is at the foot of the hill, and is a marble

*Rev. N. Bumt is said to have supplied the congregation with preaching from 1783 to the time that Rev. Dällicker assumed the pastorate.

pyramid about eight feet high. It bears the following inscriptions:

On the southwest side:

"Virtue, Liberty, and Independence."

On the southeast side:

"Within these walls surrounded, they
Can yet be thought to claim a tear;
Oh, smite thy gentle breast, and say,
'The friends of freedom slumber here.'

"We here their humble graves adorn,—
We, too, may fall and ask a tear,—
That proves the evening shall be clear."

On the northwest side:

"Their names, though lost in earth below,
And hence are not recorded here,
Are known where lasting pleasures flow,
Beyond the reach of death and fear.

"Their feet have trod misfortune's sands,
Their lives by hardships worn down;
They're gone, we trust, to brighter lands,
To brighter sunshine of their own."

On the northeast side:

"Sacred to the Memory of Twenty-two Revolutionary Soldiers, who in the Fall of 1777, when the American Army had encamped at the Valley Forge, were lodged in the German Reformed Church (in sight), then occupied as a hospital; who there, distant from their homes, uncomforted by friends and kind relatives, deceased in the Spring of 1778, of a fever then prevailing in the camp; who were interred in this ground and where they slumbered in their peaceful but neglected tomb [except that Mr. Henry Hipple, Sr., preserved the ground,] until the Union Battalion of Volunteers of Chester County, aided by the generous and patriotic people of this vicinity, resolved to

have them enclosed and a monument placed over them; the foundation of which accordingly was laid on the 19th of November, 1831, upon which occasion regular military ceremonies were observed, and a full oration delivered, to perpetuate the profound regard due the individuals who paid the forfeit of their precious lives for our sacred rights, and for privileges which they were never permitted to enjoy, and to contribute to generations unborn the memory of the precious price of the Liberty & Independence of our happy Union. They have raised this Monument on the 25th of October, 1833, and which they also dedicate to the memory of a number of other Revolutionary Soldiers who, the same time and same manner, deceased in the Lutheran Church (then used as an hospital and are buried near it and in other places of this vicinity)."

It was during the pastorate of Rev. Herman that the second church building was erected. In 1812 the congregation met in their school-house to devise plans to erect a new church edifice. John Laubach, Casper Schneider and Henry Hipple were appointed a committee to see to the erection of the proposed new church edifice. This building was forty-five feet long and thirty-five feet wide, built of red, yellow and white free-stone. There was no basement in the building, consequently the ceiling was very high. There were three doors to enter the building—one at each gable end and one on the south side. Upon entering the building, four blocks of pews became noticeable, one block in each corner. These were raised about three inches from the floor. The backs of the pews were straight and anything but comfortable. On the top of each pew was fastened a board, inclining at an angle of about thirty degrees; this served as a hymnal receptacle.

These blocks of pews were so arranged as to leave a large vacant space; in the centre of this space, immediately in front of the pulpit, stood a large box table, four feet square and three feet high. This was commonly termed the altar. The pulpit was in the shape of our modern goblet. Immediately above the pulpit was a projection or roof; this was known as the sounding board. The pulpit was only sufficiently large enough for one to occupy it at a time. Thirteen steps led from the chancel up into the pulpit. At the end of the pulpit steps there was a pew with a little door attached to it at each end; this was known as the "elder's pew." Immediately under the pulpit there was another pew; this was occupied by the deacons. The deacons, in gathering the alms, had a large black rod with a black velvet purse attached, and a small bell suspended from the purse; in those days this rather odd combination was known as a "Klingle-sock." The church had a gallery on three sides, and immediately on the gallery in front of the pulpit stood a large pipe organ. It is authoritatively stated that no stove was found in this church building until the year 1834. In this year, the congregation purchased two wood stoves of large dimensions. It is said that this building was then regarded as the most beautiful edifice in this section of country.

Three years after the laying of the corner-stone, a most villainous and sacrilegious act was committed.

The corner-stone containing most valuable documents was broken and robbed of its contents.

In the year 1821, Rev. John C. Guldin, a young man but twenty-two years old, was called to succeed the Rev. Frederic Herman. Rev. Mr. Guldin was a firm supporter of what was then known as the "New Measure System." About the year 1828, there was a division in the congregation on doctrinal points, all of which were the logical outcome of this "New Measure System." This breach widened as the years passed by until the year 1848, when the "Anti-New Measure" party withdrew, and organized a new congregation and subsequently built St. Vincent Reformed Church. Pastor Guldin continued in this field until 1840, when he withdrew and accepted a call to the Grindstone Hill charge in Franklin county, Pa. He was succeeded by Rev. Jacob W. Hangen, who served the congregation for about one year. He was succeeded by Rev. Andrew S. Young, who was pastor from 1843 to 1845. On account of ill health he was compelled to resign the pastorate. Rev. John R. Kooken succeeded him, who was pastor until 1846.

In October, 1847, Rev. Alfred B. Shenkle, who was practically raised and bred in this congregation, became the pastor. The congregation, during Mr. Shenkle's pastorate, made remarkable progress both numerically and spiritually. During the year 1860 the building was enlarged and remodeled. Fifteen feet were added to the north end of the present struct-

ure, thus making its total length sixty feet. A basement was put in the church, and otherwise beautified. On Christmas Day, 1860, the church was rededicated in the presence of a large concourse of people. The congregation was served by pastor Shenkle until October 4, 1868, thus making his pastorate among these people twenty-one years and six months.

During the winter of 1869, Rev. Maxwell S. Rowland was called to the vacant pastorate. His pastorate was eminently successful. He remained pastor until February 14, 1881. He was succeeded by the Rev. D. W. Ebbert. Mr. Ebbert began his labors here the first Sabbath in May of the same year.

By this time it became necessary to repair the church edifice, and thus, during the summer and fall of 1882, the church was frescoed and repainted inside; also new pulpit furniture was procured and placed instead of the old, a new organ was purchased, and the building otherwise beautified. The church was reopened with appropriate services, Rev. D. Ernest Klopp, D. D., preaching the re-opening sermon.

During the year 1882 strenuous efforts were made to establish a Reformed church in Spring City. This was finally accomplished. A large number of the East Vincent members living in Spring City, or at least close by, withdrew their membership and assisted in organizing what is now the First Reformed Church of Spring City. This was a considerable loss to the mother church. About the same time a num-

ber connected with St. John's Reformed Church, Phœnixville, Pa., thus making the loss still more perceptible.

The First Reformed Church, Spring City, and East Vincent were constituted a charge, and Rev. Mr. Ebbert remained pastor until 1887. He was succeeded by the Rev. Leighton G. Kremer, who remained pastor up to the time of his death, August 25, 1890. After Mr. Kremer's death, the First Reformed Church of Spring City was constituted a charge, and East Vincent Reformed Church united with the Pikeland Reformed Church. This charge called as their pastor the licentiate I. Calvin Fisher, who was ordained and installed as pastor on June 11, 1891, by a committee of Philadelphia Classis, consisting of Revs. John H. Sechler, F. C. Yost and C. B. Alspach.

In the Fall of 1891 the basement of the church was thoroughly renovated. The one room was divided into a main room, Bible class room and infant room, the two latter being separated from the main room by a sliding glass partition. All the old pews have been removed and comfortable chairs put in their place. The walls have been wainscoted three feet high, and otherwise beautified, so that the basement now presents a most gratifying appearance. The re-opening services of the basement took place the first Sabbath in December, 1891, Rev. J. Lewis Fluck preaching the sermon. This congregation now numbers 106 members.

At the first communion held in the new edifice, in 1758, John Laubach presented to the congregation, a full communion service made out of Mexican silver dollars. That the metal was good is attested by the fact that it is still used, and in excellent condition.

In the old graveyard attached to the church are buried nearly all the early members of the congregation. Of the many hundreds that are interred in said cemetery, Benjamin Boyn is said to be the first. Other early burials, as indicated on the tombstones, are the following: Peter Defralin lived from 1733 to 1787; Thomas Snider, 1716 to 1782; George Yeager, 1718 to 1790; John Olwine, 1734 to 1791; Peter Shunk (uncle of Governor), 1756 to 1814; Henry Hipple, 1759 to 1843; John Hoffman, 1745 to 1814; Michael Saiffer, 1724 to 1802; John Labach, 1728 to 1808.

The following is a list of the pastors:

Rev. John Phillip Leidick . . . . . 17— to 1783.
Rev. N. Bumb . . . . . 1783 to 1784.
Rev. Fred. Dälliker . . . . . 1784 to 1799.
Rev. Fred. Herman . . . . . 1799 to 1821.
Rev. John C. Guldin . . . . . 1821 to 1840.
Rev. Jacob W. Hangen . . . . . 1840 to 1842.
Rev. Andrew S. Young . . . . . 1842 to 1844.
Rev. John R. Kooken . . . . . 1845 to 1846.
Rev. Andrew Hoffman . . . . . 1846 to 1847.
Rev. Alfred B. Shenkle . . . . . 1847 to 1868.
Rev. Maxwell S. Rowland . . . . . 1869 to 1881.
Rev. David W. Ebbert . . . . . 1881 to 1887.
Rev. Leighton G. Kremer . . . . . 1887 to 1890.
Rev. I. Calvin Fisher . . . . . 1891 to ——.

GENERAL OUTLOOK.

That the East Vincent congregation in 1848 was divided, thus giving rise to another organization so near as St. Vincent, is a misfortune which must ever be regretted. These two congregations have a combined membership of about 225, and while both of them are, no doubt, doing an excellent work, yet with their united spiritual, moral and financial energies, what a power the "Reformed Church on the Hill" might become. Perhaps this generation, or the children of this generation, may live to behold such a glorious consummation. May we not hope for it?

In the present state of affairs, the work at East Vincent is being aggressively carried forward by the pastor and people. The future outlook is bright and promising. Under the present pastorate of about ten months, twenty have been added to the church, and the outlook for the coming year is very encouraging.

The Sunday School is not very large. Owing to the organization in Spring City and Phœnixville a large number of the young people have moved thither and connected with said churches. There is, however, an enrollment of about 110. The school is well graded, being divided into three departments—Infant, Main, Bible Class. Father Alexander Hoffman served as Superintendent of this school for many years, but owing to age declined to be re-elected. The pastor has been elected to succeed him and has been serving as such for about eight months.

The financial condition of the congregation is healthy. There is no encumbrance resting on the church, but on the other hand there is a surplus fund of $1200. The contributions for benevolence have increased very materially for the past few years.

The congregation is well organized for active work, sustaining a Sunday School Association, Y. P. S. C. E., Ladies' Aid Society and Ladies' Missionary Society. Woman's work in the congregation is well organized and aggressively carried forward.

The present consistory is composed of the pastor, I. Calvin Fisher; elders, Reuben Beerbower, Alexander Hoffman, Jacob High, David R. Buckwalter, Christian Snyder and Christian W. Brown; deacons, Hiram Souders, William Z. Styer, John Wagoner and Joseph M. Bertolette.

ST. PETER'S (PIKELAND) REFORMED CHURCH.

The history of St. Peter's (Pikeland) Reformed Church dates back to the latter part of the eighteenth century, and more particularly to the early part of the present century. During these early years, it was frequently the custom for the "newcomers" of various denominations to gather in private dwellings for worship. It is to these meetings that the present St. Peter's Reformed congregation owes its origin.

The Lutheran denomination planted itself in the Pikeland townships as early as the year 1770, effecting an organization during that same year. During the Spring and Summer of 1772, a log church was erected on the present site. The dedication sermon was preached by the Rev. Henry Melchior Muhlenburg. This house of worship served for a period of about forty years, finally becoming too dilapidated, so that it was deemed very necessary to erect a new building. At this time overtures were made by the German Reformed people living in the community to the Lutherans.

The following articles of agreement were made and signed August 6, 1811:

BETWEEN the Rev. Frederick Jasinski, present minister of the German Lutheran Church called St. Peter's, in the township of Pikeland; John Emery, Benjamin Sheneman, Michael Slonaker, Frederick Strough, George Hartman and Adam Moses, elders; George Deery, Jr., Jacob Painter and John King, deacons; being the present members of the corporation of said church, of the one part, and Conrad Keeley, trustee; George Snyder, Henry Laubach and John Boyer, elders; John Snyder and Henry Serger, deacons; being the officers of the Reformed German or Presbyterian congregation, worshipping in said church by permission of the congregation, of the other part. In consideration of the payment of £5 unto the parties of the first part, they bargained and sold unto the parties of the second one undivided moiety or half part of the lot on which St. Peter's is erected, and of the school-house and burying-ground thereon, and to have use of the church every other Sunday for public worship; and the parties of the second part to be at one-half the expense of the church which the parties of the first part are now erecting on said lot and at one-half of all expenses."

Exactly one week after these articles of agreement had been formed, the corner-stone of the new edifice was laid. Besides the pastor-loci, the Rev. Frederick Jasinski, the following clergymen were present: Rev. Charles G. Harman, Kutztown, Berks county, Pa., and Rev. Mr. Latta, of the Reformed church; Rev. Jacob Miller, of Falconer Swamp, near Boyertown, Pa., and Rev. John P. Hecht, Pottstown, of the Lutheran church. The building committee on the Reformed side consisted of Henry Laubach and George Snyder.

The building was put up of native stone and plastered outside, and at the time was regarded as a model church. The building upon its completion cost $2836.45½. The same was consecrated to the service of the Triune God under the name of St. Peter's,

on the 4th day of October, 1812. This building, well-constructed as it was, and eminently satisfactory, had but a brief stay. It was occupied alternately each Sabbath by the Lutheran and Reformed congregations for but the brief period of twenty-two years. On January 20, 1835, the building was destroyed by fire, together with its magnificent pipe organ and all its valuable contents. The fire is said to have been of an incendiary origin. What the fiend's object was is not known to this day, but that the deed was a most diabolical one no one will dispute.

Though this building was laid in ashes, the congregation was not in the least degree dismayed, but went courageously forward and began to rebuild, so that on April 24, 1835, the corner-stone was laid. The clergymen present on this festive occasion were the Rev. Jesse B. Knipe (then pastor), of the Reformed church; Rev. Jacob Wampole, Rev. Conrad Miller and Rev. J. W. Richards, of the Lutheran church; Rev. Levi Bull of the Episcopalian church. The greater part of a year was spent in the erection of the present edifice. The dedicatory services took place on April 15, 1836. The services were extended over two days, conducted by different clergymen from a distance. The two pastors were the same as at the laying of the corner-stone. Visiting clergymen consisted of the Rev. J. Metart, Rev. Frederick Ruthrauff (who later on became pastor of the congregation) and C. F. Weddew, of the Lutheran church; Rev. Levi

Bull and Rev. Mr. Mintzer, of the Episcopalian church.

The building at the time of its completion was regarded a model of neatness, and was prized very highly by both congregations. This building has a gallery on three sides, and thus is capable of seating well nigh 500 people.

From this time on both Reformed and Lutheran congregations continued to worship peacefully and unmolested in their new home. During this period the congregation, under the pastoral care of the Rev. Jesse B. Knipe, made rapid strides of progress. St. Peter's congregation owes no little to this sainted father; he worked faithfully for the interests of the church he loved so much.

The Reformed and Lutherans continued to worship in the same building up to within a few years, when it was mutually agreed that each congregation was to have a separate house of worship. The building erected in 1835 being owned by both parties, as well as its grounds, was to be disposed of by some means or other. Finally it was decided that the building should be sold at public sale. The trustees of the Reformed congregation, Messrs. Joseph W. Rapp, William Rapp and James Rees, being the highest bidders, were declared the purchasers. The amount paid was $2951. This transaction took place March 1, 1889.

As soon as the Reformed congregation became the sole owners, steps were taken to remodel the church building. The exterior of the building was renewed

and beautified. In the interior, however, the change is more perceptible. Instead of the old-fashioned pews will be found semi-circular pews, the high pulpit has been changed so as to be more modern, new carpets have been added, the wood-work painted, and the wall frescoed. A vestibule has also been added. All the improvements amounted to about $1100. The committee on remodelling consisted of Jacob B. Stauffer and Joseph W. Rapp.

The rededication of this house of worship took place on Feb. 23, 1890. The sermon was preached by the late Rev. J. H. A. Bomberger, D. D., LL. D., President Ursinus College, Collegeville, Pa. Rev. Francis C. Yost was pastor at the time.

So far as numbers are concerned Pikeland Reformed congregation at no time numbered much over a hundred. The church records show that the highest number that communed at any time was only seventy (May 14, 1836). Those communing at that time were Isaac Smith, Mary Smith, John Labaugh, Alexander Marshel, John Olwine, Henry Rixstine, Rachel Rixstine, George Smith, John Davis, Isaac Neiman, Rebecca David, Jacob Rixstine, John Rixtine, Samuel Rixstine, Mary Fetters, Elizabeth Shoffner, Elizabeth Snyder, Susan Rhoads, Catharine March, Margaret Slonaker, Catharine Rixstine, Margaret Labaugh, Catharine E. Glison, Elizabeth Huzzard, Sarah Williams, Amelia Black, Sarah Wisner, Catharine King, Catharine Fetters, Catharine Miller, Mary Mauk,

Catharine Mauk, Catharine Acker, Lea Acker, Catharine Anderson, Mary A. Watkins, Elizabeth Fetters, Mary Fetters, Eve Fisher, Eleanor Channel, Catharine Harris, Mary Paul, Catharine Wells, Susan Devoe, Catharine Wentz, Eve Kenney, Rebecca March, Ann March, Catharine Snyder, Margaret Reese, Maria Frederick, Margaret Frock, Peter Frederick, Jacob Neiman, Rebecca Davis, Mary Todd, Maria Sloyer, John Acker, Barbara Saylor, John Acker, Jr., Henrietta Fisher, Mr. Friday, David Paul, Samuel Williams, Mrs. Wager, Henry Huzzard, Susan Paul.

In looking over the present membership roll, barely one-half dozen of the names here recorded have left any lineage of the present number. From all that has been previously stated we can readily glean that the membership at no time was large. Again bearing in mind that St. Paul's and St. Matthew's are offsprings of this mother congregation, the casual observer sees plainly that no large congregation can be in existence here at the present day. Besides this, within two hundred yards of the Reformed Church, there is found a General Council Lutheran Church and a General Synod Lutheran Church. Within two miles there is an M. E. Church.

The same facts again will tell the story that the Sunday School is comparatively small. Though few in number, the membership is, however, made up of an active and energetic people. They sustain a Missionary society, which, during the fiscal year 1890–'91, raised the sum of $60, besides raising the amount for

Classical Apportionment and paying liberally towards the pastor's salary.

The congregation has been kindly remembered at times by bequests from the following individuals: Henry Labaugh (1818) $100, Daniel Harp (1825) $50, Jacob Keely (1865) $500, Henry Keely (1874) $600, Samuel Acker (1880) $1500, Rev. Jesse B. Knipe (1885) $500, Henry Snyder (1887) $1000.

Two thousand, three hundred dollars of the above was expended in purchasing the half interest, formerly held by the Lutherans, in the present church property. While two thousand remains invested for the use of the Reformed Church (St. Peter's), of West Pikeland.

The outlook for the work in the future is encouraging. The work is being energetically carried forward by pastor and people. The following are the members of the present Consistory: Pastor, I. Calvin Fisher; Elders, Benjamin Rapp, Isaiah March, Jacob B. Stauffer, Isaac Stauffer and Joseph W. Rapp; Deacons, Howard W. Davis and Alvah March.

PASTORS.

From the time of organization until 1830 the date of the pastorate is unknown.

Rev. Frederick A. Herman	1811 to ——
Rev. Jacob W. Dechant	—— to ——
Rev. Casper Wach	—— to ——
Rev. Jesse B. Knipe	1830 to 1882
Rev. S. P. Mauger	1882 to 1888
Rev. Jas. R. Lewis (Supply)	Oct. 1888 to May 1889
Rev. F. C. Yost	1889 to 1890
Rev. I. Calvin Fisher	1891 to ——

ST. PETER'S REFORMED CHURCH,
Warwick.

ST. PETER'S REFORMED CHURCH.

WARWICK TOWNSHIP.

The readers of these historical sketches of the Reformed churches of Chester county, perhaps may wonder why they are all located in its northeastern part, while the other protestant denominations are found throughout the county.

When William Penn was seeking a spot where he with his followers could form a settlement free from persecution for their religious views, he had gone to Holland, but not finding much encouragement to settle there, he returned to England, when King Charles II. granted to him the province of Pennsylvania.

Penn's liberal and just code of laws made for his own followers (the Quakers or Friends), attracted the attention of other Protestant sects of Europe, who, like Penn and his followers, suffered persecution for their conscience sake.

Penn, while in Holland, made the acquaintance of one Benjohan Furly, of Rotterdam, a German, a man of learning and much wealth, and of such influence among the Germans as to induce numbers of them to settle in Pennsylvania. William Penn was much pleased that a man of his wealth, family and character should take an interest in his new province. This

immigration of Friends, Huguenots and Germans greatly increased, so that about the year 1726, when Patrick Gordon was governor of the province, the legislative council appointed a committee to report on the matter, as the safety of the colony was feared to be in danger. The report of this committee was so favorable to the industrious habits, religious and moral ways of these immigrants, especially the Germans, that they were encouraged to settle in the province. It was about this time, 1726–'50, that the great tide of German immigration set in, and has made the population of Pennsylvania so largely German. Coming to Philadelphia, they, being a pastoral people, pushed out into the wilds of Bucks and Montgomery counties. Many of them, crossing the Schuylkill, settled in the Vincents, Pikelands, Coventrys and Nantmeals.

The first settlers of the Vincents, Pikelands, etc., were English, as their names would indicate: as, Joseph Pike purchased a large tract of land of Penn, which is now Pikeland. Sir Matthias Vincent did the same, and leaves his name to posterity in the names of the two townships in Chester county. Coventry from Samuel Nutt, who came from Coventry in Warwickshire, England. Nantmel (now Nantmeal) from Welsh settlers who came up the Brandywine from the valley. French creek was originally called Vincent river, its Indian name being Sankanac. The origin of the name French creek I have been unable to discover.

These early German immigrants were of the Lutheran and Reformed churches of Holland. In many places they formed union congregations, and worshiped in the same church buildings. This was the case at St. Peter's, Pikeland, St. Matthew's, St. Paul's, and at St. Peter's, Warwick. As has been narrated in the history of Brownback's church, that it was the first Reformed congregation organized in Chester county, those of that faith worshiped there; but many of these early immigrants had followed up the valley of the French creek, and settled in and around what is now termed Knauertown, which takes its name from one of the first settlers.

These early German immigrants had left their "Fatherland" on account of the persecutions they were subject to for breaking away from the Catholic church. They in their new settlement were quite distant from Brownback's where they had gone to worship for near a half-century, and in those early days the usual mode of traveling being on foot or on horse-back we suppose they resolved to build what is now termed St. Peter's Reformed Church, of Warwick. The tablet in the east wall of the building has on it this inscription:

ST. PETER'S
TEMPLE.
Built 1816.
Re-built 1853.

The books of record of this congregation from 1816 until 1836 are said to be lost, at least no one of the

present membership knows of them. John Murphy, who is now in his eighty-fourth year, says that at the time of the re-building in 1853 he saw them—that there were two of them, similar to the one that is now used as a book of record. We trust that a searching inquiry will be started, and that they may yet be found. So the reader must cast a retrospective view over these twenty years of unrecorded events, and in imagination see the devotion, the sacredness, and the love these early settlers had for the faith they professed in Christ, to erect and to preserve a place of worship for themselves and for their children.

From the records and from tradition, this congregation has been attached to the "Brownback charge," and whoever supplied it preached at stated periods at St. Peter's. We find in the present book of record that the Lutherans held services here. Rev. Frederick Ruthrauf records in his own hand that he commenced his services here in May, 1836, and for several years are recorded the names of those who communed at the Lutheran services. The last record of Lutheran communicants at St. Peter's appears to have been November 10, 1839. We do not find that the Lutherans ever held any property rights, only that they were granted the privilege of holding service.

The location of the church is on the south side of the Ridge road—in early times known as Nutt's road—in the eastern part of Warwick township, which derives its name from Warwick furnace, which took

its name from Warwickshire, the native place of Samuel Nutt, one of the earliest settlers.

The land was either donated or purchased of John Nice, and for many years it was known by the name of Nice's church. It is forty feet by thirty-two feet, built of stone, lighted by ten large gothic windows filled with rolled plate glass in nicely blended colors. The entrance is by one door-way in the east end, with an aisle from the door to the open space around the altar. The pews are in two blocks on either side of the aisle. There is a gallery across the east end of the building. The pulpit is in the west end opposite the door, is neatly furnished, and the chancel is carpeted. The building will seat two hundred and fifty persons.

A person who was in the building before it was rebuilt in 1853, says, that "there were three doors—one opening towards the road, one opening into the grave-yard, and one where the door is now; it had a gallery on three sides, and was higher in the story than at present. In rebuilding, the roof was lowered and the gallery on the sides removed."

The congregation was never very large. In looking over the records of communicants, we count from twenty up to forty, the average being about thirty. In April, 1871, twenty-six persons joined in the communion.

In going over the records, we have culled such events as we think will be of general interest to the reader.

In 1871 the present iron fence which surrounds the church, was erected by general subscription, and cost $257.50.

In July, 1873, Henry Swinehart donated an organ to St. Peter's congregation, which cost $170.

In August, 1874, the following persons gave towards the support of Ursinus College, Collegeville, Pa., as follows:

Davis Knauer	$25.
Christian Amole	25.
Jonathan Knauer	25.
Wm. Nice	10.
Wm. Amole	10.
John S. Eyrich	10.
Henry Amole	10.
John Murphy	5.
Samuel Lohr	5.
John Roberts	5.
Mary Swinehart	3.
Harry Hummel	1.

In 1876 there were nine stalls of sheds erected by individual subscriptions, on land donated by John Murphy, Sr., which cost $160.

About the year 1880, the church building was repaired and repainted, the cost of which we find no record.

In 1891 a new organ was put in the place of the first one, and cost $100.

At the present time, Rev. Henry Hilbish, who is the pastor of Brownback's, is pastor here; services are held only every two weeks, in the afternoons.

A Sunday-school has always been held here, but only in the Summer; this year, however, they organized about New Year, and hope to continue it throughout the year.

The cemetery connected with St. Peter's contains about one and a quarter acres of ground, inclosed with a substantial stone wall. In it rest the remains of many who, we have no doubt, helped erect this church building, and who, while in the flesh, delighted to worship in this sanctuary. We copy a few inscriptions from the tombstones, some of which indicate that it was a place of burial before the present building was erected.

John Nice, son of George and Elizabeth Nice; born February 20, 1750; died October 28, 1826.

Magdaline, wife of John Nice and daughter of Rev. Philip Leidig; born October 14, 1750; died January 28, 1846.

Gabriel Shuler; born June 25, 1747; died December 30, 1812.

James Everhart; born February 24, 1789; died December 26, 1863.

Mary Magdaline Everhart; born June 9, 1797; died March 12, 1869.

John Knauer; born December 12, 1778; died July 28, 1845.

Henry Hitheny; born December 17, 1743; died December 17, 1812.

John Amole; died of wounds received at battle of Antietam, November 3, 1862, aged 22 years, 16 days.

Daniel Murphy; died at Camp hospital near Stafford Court House, Va., February 9, 1863, aged 26 years, 1 day.

St. Peter's has been remembered with several legacies by those who, during their lives, loved the church, and now their good deeds do follow them:

John Nice, one hundred dollars; Miss —— Walleigh, one hundred dollars; Mary Swinehart, five hundred dollars. The interest of these bequests is to go to the support of the minister supplying St. Peter's.

We found no constitution or articles of incorporation, by which this congregation is governed. This should claim their early attention.

In conclusion we would say that though the work of gathering these records and putting them in a more permanent form for preservation, has been imperfectly done, yet we trust it may lead to a more careful recording and preserving of the history of the Reformed churches everywhere, and especially in Chester county.

ST MATTHEW'S REFORMED CHURCH.

ST. MATTHEW'S REFORMED CHURCH.

WEST VINCENT.

Already by the earliest settlers in this section of Pennsylvania, the church and the school-house were regarded as the beacon lights of a true civilization. It was not a mere accident that, in earlier years, they were nearly always found side by side, but it was a practice resting upon a most important truth as its foundation principle. These two institutions were looked upon as one in their aim and object. They were regarded as mutually co-operative in bringing about that enlightenment of mind and heart upon which the true prosperity and the highest welfare of any community is ever conditioned. There is no stronger proof of the school-house having fulfilled its true object, than the church standing near its side. Whatever *else* it may signify, to the learned and the devout, it is a beautiful piece of instructive symbolism. All true learning must lead up to God. There is a time in the life of every right thinking man when this truth will assume all the force and intensity of a conviction. He sees evidences of a plan larger than he can grasp, he sees forces at work mighter than he can comprehend, and when he realizes how the ponderous

machinery of the universe moves on without a clash, without a jar, obedient, with unerring certainty, to the Master's will—lost in the vastness of its grandeur, he says to his reason, "tarry here (in the school-house) while I go yonder (into the temple) and worship."

Thus our forefathers associated the one with the other. They saw that religion could not exist without education, and on the other hand that the highest type of education could not exist without religion. Education must lead up to religion, and religion must stimulate education. As in the case of nearly all our Reformed churches in Chester county, St. Matthew's had its origin in the school-house.

The religious persuasion of the community seems to have been prevailingly Lutheran, German Reformed, Baptist, and a few Episcopalians. There was about this time also a general religious awakening, leading, in 1833, to the erection of Windsor Baptist and St. Andrew's Episcopalian churches. Nearly all of the Lutheran and German Reformed people had church relations either with St. Peter's, Pikeland, or with Brownback's Reformed Church, Coventry. But under the influence of this awakening they were led to seek conditions which would afford them larger religious privileges. Accordingly an effort was made by both denominations to secure the services of some one who should come among them at stated periods and minister to them in word and in doctrine. The Reformed people secured the services of Rev. Jesse B. Knipe,

then quite a young man, who preached alternately in what were known as Dolby's and Hefflefinger's school-houses, the former in Uwchlan, the latter in West Vincent township. In 1833 two congregations were organized. Of the Lutheran congregation we have no records at hand. The following is the vestry elected by the Reformed congregation, Rev. Jesse B. Knipe being pastor: Henry Keely, George Keely, George Sloyer, Jacob Hoffman, John Shimer, Joseph Kulp and Jacob Kulp.

The want of a more suitable place of worship in the community led these, our ancestors in the faith, to contemplate the erection of a house of worship to be dedicated especially to the service of God. For this purpose a plot of ground was purchased from Joshua Woodward, situated on the Conestoga pike in West Vincent township. Here the Reformed and Lutheran congregations jointly erected a substantial, and for that day a well-finished, church building, during the year 1833. The corner-stone was laid on May 27, 1833, and on December 10 of the same year, the building was dedicated to the services of Almighty God. It was a stone building, thirty-five by forty-two feet, and two stories high, with gallery on three sides. Two doors in front served as places of entrance, and two aisles, running through the full length of the house, divided the pews into three rows. Against the inside of the wall, between the two doors of entrance, was the pulpit, and on either side of the doors was an

ascent to the galleries. The pews, facing the pulpit, also faced the doors of entrance. The cost of this building was nearly $1700.

For forty-seven years this church was a house of worship, a place of prayer, a land-mark of the community. Nearly all who crossed its threshold in these earlier years have passed away. Many of them were laid to rest in the cemetery adjoining the church, where they are awaiting the dawn of resurrection's morn.

In the early part of 1834, the Rev. Jesse B. Knipe was succeeded by Rev. John C. Guldin as pastor. The organization under Rev. Knipe, it seems, had made no provision for a constitution by which it was to be governed. Accordingly, on March 3, 1884, the vestry of the congregation met in the church to adopt a Preamble, Rules, Resolutions, etc. We here give a copy of the Preamble, as showing their true conception of the grounds upon which rested the necessity of church government. It reads thus:

"WHEREAS, We have among ourselves formed a German Reformed congregation, worshiping in St. Matthew's church in the township of West Vincent, county of Chester and state of Pennsylvania, and

WHEREAS, No society can subsist in harmony and continued satisfaction to its own members, without having and observing proper rules for their government—'God being a God (of order) not of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints' (I Cor. xiv, 33); and who commands that all things should be done decently and in order (I Cor. xiv, 40)—we the Vestry, and all who now are and intend to become members of said congregation, have adopted Rules for the regulation and external government of the affairs of this congregation."

The early membership of this congregation were few in number. The first communion was held under the pastorate of Rev. John C. Guldin, on May 25, 1834. Thirty-two persons communed. Of these Mrs. Esther Hipple, Mrs. Sophia Smith, Mary Fetters (Kulp) and Margaret Dillinger (Frock) still remain. Toward the close of Rev. Guldin's ministry, the number of communicants was larger, on one or two occasions it was double that of the first, but the records show a great deal of irregularity in attendance. Rev. Guldin closed his ministry in 1837 and was succeeded by Rev. Jacob Ziegler. St. Matthew's and St. Peter's (Warwick) then constituted a charge. The spiritual interests of the congregations seem to have been on the decline about this time. In one place we find a list of twenty-four communicants recorded, and added to it is the following note:

"The fewness of the number who communed may be accounted for, partly, through the inclemency of the weather, but largely by the fact that the love of many has grown cold."

Rev. Zeigler continued his ministry only for a little more than a year. The reason, which he gives in a personal letter, being that the charge was not self-supporting. He died at York, Pa., 188–.

From 1839 to 1840 the charge was served by Rev. J. S. Wolf. There are no records of his ministry.

On Nov. 14, 1840, Rev. Edward Smith was unanimously elected pastor of St. Matthew's congregation. He accepted the call and preached his first sermon

from Romans i, 16, Dec. 13, 1840. There were several additions to the membership of the church about this time, and the records also show a number of marriage and baptismal ceremonies performed by him. On March 21st, at a congregational meeting, it was unanimously decided "that Rev. E. D. Smith should not remain pastor of said church any longer than until May 1, 1842." Rev. Smith was a noted imposter, appearing under different names. He was received into Philadelphia Classis (1840) on forged papers purporting to have been given by the Congregational church. He was deposed from the ministry in 1843, but was received, as J. W. Bond, into the Classis of Virginia in 1850, also on forged papers. From this body he was excommunicated in 1852. Subsequently he was arrested on the charge of horse stealing, and finally died in prison.

Rev. Jacob Hangen was the next pastor, elected at a congregational meeting, June 27, 1842. His ministry continued only for about nine months. He preached his last sermon at the house of a Mr. Langabach, in Skippack township, Montgomery county, and died in the same place a short time afterward. He lies buried in the cemetery of St. Luke's Reformed Church, Trappe, where the congregation (which he was also serving at that time) has placed a marble slab to his memory. Aged 37 years.

On June 15, 1843, Licentiate Andrew S. Young was elected to the pastorate of this congregation and charge.

On account of failing health, he was compelled to resign his pastorate at the close of 1844. Rev. Mr. Young was one of the excellent of the earth; a man of classic culture and refined tastes. In his ministry he was earnest and faithful, and universally beloved. Died at Allentown, Pa., Feb. 15, 1848.

Another short pastorate of this church was that of Rev. John C. Fulk, continuing from October, 1844, to September, 1845. Thus we have seven pastorates in about ten years. What results must follow such a state of things, we know by experience. In this case the membership had dwindled down to about eighteen in number. The frequent change of pastors, the lack of real vital zeal on the part of the members, and, perhaps, other causes unknown to the writer, combined very unfavorably for the future prospects of this congregation. The great wonder is that they survived, at all, the following six years, during which they were without a pastor.

Early in the year 1850, Rev. Jesse B. Knipe commenced his long and fruitful pastorate, which continued until 1869. The scattered members of the congregation were gradually united, and those without brought under the influence of the church. In connection with his first communion, there were received a number who still remain pillars in the church to-day. Father Knipe was a slow builder, but the structures which he completed were, as a rule, very little in dan-

ger of tumbling down through unburnt or half-burnt bricks, or poorly prepared mortar.

In the year 1860 there was a great revival, which marked the beginning of a new epoch in this church. Over one hundred persons, it is said, professed conversion. Of these, about twenty-five united themselves with the Reformed congregation. In 1866 another great awakening in the church made an addition of about the same number to the congregation.

Immediately after the beginning of Rev. M. S. Rowland's ministry in April, 1869, the third great awakening in the history of this church took place. Fifty-three persons were received into Christian fellowship. Some of these, no doubt, are dead, but a large proportion of them have gone back into the world. Among the original number, fewer than a dozen can be traced as having any church relations at present. It was an instance of too rapid building. Rev. Rowland's ministry continued until May, 1879. He is now pastor of a Presbyterian church in Whitesville, New Jersey.

His successor as pastor of St. Matthew's was Rev. L. D. Stambaugh, who commenced his ministry in May, 1879. About this time the Reformed congregation purchased the interest of the Lutheran congregation in the buildings and cemetery for $1000, the latter having erected a very handsome church building about a half-mile distant, on the Conestoga pike. During the year 1880 the Reformed congregation also

decided to erect a new church building upon the site then occupied by the old one. Christian K. Woodland was the supervising architect of this building. The corner-stone was laid May 27, 1880, Rev. D. Ernest Klopp, D. D., preaching the sermon on this occasion. Through the liberal gifts and faithful service on the part of the members, the new building was completed and ready for dedication by October 6 of the same year. Rev. J. H. Sechler, of the First Church, Philadelphia, preached the sermon, and the dedicatory service was read by the pastor, Rev. L. D. Stambaugh.

The building is among the finest of the country churches in northern Chester county. It is built of stone, sixty-five by forty-two feet, and two stories high. The appointments of the first floor are a spacious hallway, a lecture or Sunday-school room furnished with moveable chairs, an infant class room and a library. On the second floor is the main audience room, a model of substantial and well-finished workmanship. It is lighted by fifteen rolled cathedral glass windows which were donated by the following parties: Malinda M. Acker, Mary M. Brownback, A. Fetters, William Brownback, John and Esther Hipple, Samuel and Catharine Kimes, John and Hannah Brownback, Henry and S. Smith, Jacob Keely, the children, in memory of Joseph and Catharine Sturges, the children, in memory of Dr. Jesse C. and M. Strickland, and the grandchildren, in memory of William and Magda-

lene Parker; the two large windows in front were donated by the Sunday-school. The pews in this room are of black walnut, arranged in semi-circular style, and furnished with hair cushions. The floor is covered with a bright red carpet. Together with the gallery above the hallway, the seating capacity of this room is about 350 persons. The entire cost of the building was about $8000, with at least $2000 worth of material and labor donated. The grounds were nicely graded, and what appeared to be a very unfavorable site for a church building now presents a neat and beautiful location.

Following are the names of the building committee: Capt. A. Fetters, chairman; Cyrus Swinehart, secretary; J. B. Caldwell, treasurer; John B. Stauffer, Samuel Stauffer, John Mosteller, C. K. Mosteller, William Brownback, Jesse Sturges, John Hipple, Samuel Kimes and Isaac Smith.

In May, 1883, Rev. L. D. Stambaugh resigned his pastorate, and was succeeded by Rev. E. D. Wettach, of Reedsburg, Ohio, who entered upon his work here on June 8, 1884. His ministry, which closed in October, 1890, was characterized by a great deal of zeal and general activity. He enjoyed the confidence of his people, and as a pastor, was greatly beloved. He is now laboring in Trinity Reformed Mission, at Akron, Ohio.

Beginning with October, 1890, until June, 1891, the charge of which St. Matthew's forms a part, was with-

out a regular pastor. During this time, the pulpits were supplied with students from Ursinus Theological Seminary. On June 14, 1891, licentiate J. Lewis Fluck was installed as pastor of the charge. (See History of St. Paul's Reformed Church.)

At various periods in the history of this church, there have been those who desired to perpetuate their influence by making provision for its support after departing from this life. In this way the church came to be kindly remembered through the following bequests: Conrad Keely, $100 (1847); Jacob Keely, $1500 (1861): John Brownback, $250 (1872); Eli Mock, $2300 (1883).

In an organization of this kind, there are always certain ones who, by common consent, are chosen to assume the direction of its affairs. With this choice, as a matter of course, comes the responsibility of leadership. Some of those who have served the congregation in this capacity, and who were actively interested in its temporal and spiritual affairs during the period of her past history, are: Joseph Kulp, Henry Keely, Henry Hipple, William Parker, Conard Keely, Matthias Keely, George Sloyer, John Shimer, John Brownback, Jacob Kulp, William Brownback, Michael Fry, Henry Smith, David Stiteler.

The present congregation numbers about 120 members. It has never been strong numerically, though its financial obligations have always been met. It has a productive endowment fund amounting to $2400.

The congregation is favorably known throughout the church for its benevolent gifts, both by the organization and especially by individual members. Among its present membership is a large number of young people, whose active and intelligent interest in the Master's work bespeaks a useful future for the congregation.

The Sunday-school interest dates back to the time of the church organization. It took definite shape some time during the year 1833, though we can find no records going back further than 1838. From this time on there is a well-preserved record until 1850. The number of scholars varies from seventy-six, the highest, to nineteen, the lowest. Samuel Walleigh, Davis Rhoades, George Heck, Thomas Rooke, Washington Stiteler, George Hartman and George Fetters acted in the capacity of Superintendent until 1850. William Eachus filled the office for a number of years subsequent to this date, and then begins the long period of nearly thirty years during which John B. Stauffer faithfully discharged its duties. The present Superintendent is Allen H. Simmers. The Sunday-school is well organized, and the work aggressively carried forward by a corps of competent and devoted teachers. As the past has been an inspiration to the present, so may the present be an inspiration for the future.

"SUNNYSIDE."

THE PARSONAGE OF ST. MATTHEW'S CHARGE.

After the union (1885) of St. Matthew's and St. Paul's Reformed churches into one pastoral charge, it was decided that they would jointly erect a parsonage for the use of their pastor. The representative committees accordingly secured 1⅛ acres of land at Anselma, Pa., upon which the parsonage was erected. It is a spacious brick building with pressed brick front. The shape is that of an L, and there are porches on three sides. The internal appointments consist of thirteen rooms, suitably arranged for the comfort and convenience of their occupants, an abundant supply of hot and cold water on the second floor, bath room, drainage, etc. The building is heated from the cellar by hot air, and supplied with water from an artesian well 118 feet deep. It is also partly furnished. The out-buildings were designed with a view to their present use. It is located midway between the two churches, on the Pickering Valley Railroad, thus affording excellent mail and railroad facilities. It, therefore, makes a very desirable residence for a country pastor. The cost of the buildings and ground was $4500.

ST. VINCENT REFORMED CHURCH.

EAST VINCENT TOWNSHIP.

In going from Phœnixville to the Falls of French creek by the Ridge road, four Reformed churches meet the eye of the traveler. Among the number perhaps none of them is more beautifully located than St. Vincent. In the words of a recent writer—"The situation is one of great natural beauty. One can catch glimpses of the counties of Delaware, Montgomery, Berks and Lancaster. The near surrounding landscape is a panorama of fertile farms, graced with beautiful and substantial farm buildings which bespeak the thrift and enterprise of the happy owners. This congregation may well take pride in their neat surroundings, as there are but few congregations whose lines fall in pleasanter places."

We have endeavored to make this history as complete and accurate as possible. Material facts have been sought after, but we labored under great disadvantage from the fact that the records have not been kept as correctly as they might have been. What we have gleaned, therefore, we present to the public with the hope that it may be of some value at least to the reader.

The original members of this church were formerly members of East Vincent Reformed Church. As far back as 1834, owing to some differences arising at the time, each congregation was supplied by a minister from the same synod but not the same classis. By an article of agreement drawn up at the time, both congregations worshipped in the same building, one on one Sunday, the other on the following. In this way they continued to worship until 1848. During these years, no doubt, one thing led to another, making matters more and more difficult to settle, so that in October, 1851, St. Vincent sold her interest in the mother church, and concluded to erect a building of her own for the worship of God. We have no comments to offer; as we were asked to give facts only, but what might be one large congregation to-day, is unfortunately divided into two smaller ones.

For the purpose of appointing a committee to secure a site for the location of a church, the first meeting was held at the home of Henry Yeager, Sr., November 15, 1851.

The committee, consisting of John Yeager, Sr., Daniel Hipple and Abraham Taney, bought two acres of land at $100 an acre, from John Longaker. On this tract the present church edifice stands. At another meeting, a building committee was appointed consisting of John Ash, Henry Yeager, Sr., Peter Yeager, Sr., John Yeager, Sr., and George Yeager. Though it was in the Fall of the year and the Winter

season rapidly approaching, work was commenced at once, so that by Easter Monday, 1852, the corner-stone was laid. Rev. Samuel Seifert and Rev. J. Clement Miller officiated at this service. As one of the brethren stated, "this occasion gave us new courage, for then and there we found that though our flock was small, we had the good wishes and support of the Christian people and friends in the immediate neighborhood."

On September 4 of the same year, the church was dedicated. The people had great reason to rejoice this day. But a year ago in the same month they purchased the ground, and now they saw with their own eyes what people can do in so short a time if they have a mind to work. Davis Yeager has in his possession a copy of the "Montgomery Ledger" of that date wherein we find the following: "The St. Vincent German Reformed Church on the Ridge road, East Vincent township, Chester county, was dedicated to the service and worship of God on Sunday, September 4th. There were services both morning and afternoon, on Saturday and Sunday. The following ministers preached on the occasion: Rev. Conrad Miller, Rev. Dubbs, Jr., Rev. J. Clement Miller, and the pastor of the congregation, Rev. S. Seibert." The building was forty-two by sixty feet, two stories high, and cost $1999.86.

It was only a very short time after the dedication that pastor Seibert severed his connection with the congregation, and left them without a shepherd.

Previous to May 19, 1853, St. Vincent was an independent congregation, but on this date a committee authorized by Philadelphia Classis, and consisting of Revs. Samuel Helffenstein, Jacob B. Keller and John S. Ermentrout, received it into Christian fellowship, and ordained and installed the following officers: elders, John Taney, Henry Munshower, Daniel Hipple, Jesse, William, and John Yeager; deacons, Amos Keiter, Samuel Ash, Christian Wagoner.

Rev. E. W. Reinecke received and accepted a call as pastor of the congregation. In connection with his work here, he was also assistant teacher in an academy in Norristown. His first church record in the register was made October 23, 1853, and his ministry extended over a period of one year and two months. Upon this date the first communion was celebrated in the new church with 67 communicants participating. Of this number only seventeen remain who can compare the present work with the past, and who still have the privilege of coming to the Lord's table. Rev. Reinecke was born in Germany, and emigrated to this country when fourteen years of age. Having served as tutor in Marshall College for two years, and as pastor at Millersville, Pa., for five years, he commenced his labors in this congregation in the Fall of 1853. His stay was a brief one, but he endeared himself to the people. Being in his early manhood and in the possession of more than ordinary intellectual powers, no doubt he would have given

quite an impetus to the work if his services could have been continued. He was afterwards assistant pastor to his father at Shrewsbury, York county, Pa., pastor at Frederick, Md., Plainfield, Pa. In the last charge his ministry came to an end with his death, May 8, 1891, aged 68 years and 5 months.

From 1854 to 1856 classis furnished a supply in the person of Rev. Geo. D. Wolff, who was pastor of the church of the Ascension, Norristown, Pa.

The next regular pastor was Henry Weisler, who entered upon the duties of his office June 15, 1856. This was his first field, having only recently graduated from the Eastern Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa. That he was truly devoted to the cause of Christ and his church may readily be inferred from the immediate fruits of his labors. The church record shows that from the very beginning of his pastorate to the close, there was a gradual increase in membership. But the people had only fairly learned to know and love him when another vacancy was caused by his resignation. In order that we may show the esteem the people had for their beloved shepherd, we will give a part of the resolution adopted in the acceptance of his resignation.

* * * . Be it further

Resolved, That our pastor, by his humble walk and sincere devotion to the kingdom of Christ on earth, has won our affectionate attachment and esteem.

Resolved, That we sincerely recommend him to the people of his new field of labor as a worthy laborer in the vineyard of the Lord.

After ministering in various charges in Virginia, West Virginia and Maryland for a period of twenty-six years, he was obliged to retire on account of ill health. His death occurred April 13, 1889, in Mechanicstown, Md., aged 57 years.

Only a short time intervened when Rev. Jesse B. Knipe commenced his long and faithful (supply) pastorate of twenty-four years among this people. His whole ministry was spent in Chester county, and was brought to a close in the then "St. Vincent and Pikeland" charge, January 21, 1882. This was done with great reluctance, for his spirit was still willing, but his flesh was too weak to follow his ministerial duties any longer. Father Knipe, as he is familiarly known, was not what we would call a man of broad culture and polished scholarship, but he was devout and reverent, full of faith and love for the Master. In his ministerial labors he carried his religion with him wherever he went, making things pertaining to his Master's cause bear some practical relations to the affairs of daily life. His unassuming ways and quite life won him many friends outside of his own flock. This was very evident when the present pastor collected money to put a double window of stained glass into the new church to his blessed memory. Persons who heard of the movement, without our solicitation, contributed to that fund.

Under his leadership the congregation did not increase very rapidly in membership, but those whom

he did gain for Christ's kingdom still speak of him with the greatest respect and reverence. In his day a new plot of ground containing five acres was added to the cemetery, making it seven acres altogether. The church now being located as nearly central as possible, and ornamental trees being planted the whole length of the lot bordering on the Ridge road added very considerably to outside appearances.

We can not refrain from mentioning his spirit of practical benevolence when this ground was bought. Receiving $150 as pastoral salary for the year, on the day of settlement he handed back $50 toward the cemetery fund.

In 1861 classis constituted this and Pikeland congregation a charge. As was said, here he labored until his resignation, January, 1882. The following resolutions were adopted by the consistory:

Resolved, That we accept our beloved pastor's resignation with deep regret and sorrow, and pray that he may be spared to us for many years, and worship with us whenever his health permits.

Thus ended the pastoral labors of one who was loyal to duty, and now only awaited the crown of the righteous. He departed this life June 18, 1884. A large concourse of friends followed him to his last resting place in Pikeland cemetery, Chester county, Pa. At his request, his successor, Rev. S. P. Mauger, delivered the funeral address, and was assisted in the services by brethren of the Philadelphia Classis, of which he was a member.

Rev. Mauger, a graduate of Heidelberg College and Theological Seminary, had charge of this congregation for a year already, having come from Ohio July 15, 1882. His labors of three years and nine months brought about many desirable changes in the congregation. Being a young man, he was full of activity and zeal, and it did not take the congregation very long to imbibe some of it, at least. The adoption of the envelope system for the collection of the pastoral salary, the organization of the Ladies' Mite Society, and an increase in benevolent contributions, are some of the works of his hands. His resignation was handed in and took effect April 15, 1886. At present he is very acceptably serving the people of Stone Reformed Church, Northampton county, Pa.

A vacancy again occurred, which lasted for a year. During this time the pulpit was supplied by students from the theological department of Ursinus College.

The charge was now reconstructed, and St. Vincent was joined to Linfield Reformed Church, Montgomery county, Pa., and is at present known as the St. Vincent and Linfield charge.

The present pastor, Rev. J. A. Mertz, entered this, his first field of labor, in May, 1887. He was ordained and installed in this church, June 12, 1887, in the presence of representatives of both congregations. As a vacancy is more or less detrimental to the interests of a congregation, in this case it seemed especially so. Forces and influences outside of the congregation

were at work that almost proved fatal to the organization. But their new relation with Linfield, and their newly-elected pastor, gave them fresh courage and hope. One year's pastorate had wrought a great change for the better. It was said by one of our Reformed pastors that "the St. Vincent people were a little slow, but when they made a move they would go at it with a will." There seems to be a great deal of truth in this saying, if we may judge from what they did in the last few years. Three years ago in May, a meeting was held to take action upon the matter of putting a new roof on the church. Fortunately the meeting on that day, after some discussion, turned out a "remodeling meeting." In June, 1889, the demolishing of the church began, and by November of the same year the congregation held services in their new home, though it was not dedicated until February, 1890. "This was a day that shall never be forgotten by pastor and people alike, for it brought sunshine and cheer as well as great rejoicing to both, for what the Lord had done for them. Besides, such blessings as these led young and old to a fuller consecration to the Master's service, such as we had not seen it before."

The late Dr. J. H. A. Bomberger preached the dedicatory sermon. The Rev. H. Hilbish then made an appeal that the amount of the present indebtedness be raised before it was dedicated to the Lord's service.

More than was needed was the response to his appeal. The pastor then set it apart for God's service.

The building is one story, forty-two by sixty feet in size. A vestibule on the east and west side, and a recess back of the pulpit and in the wall facing the road, add much to the outside appearance, and are additions to the old building. The Sunday-school room and auditorium are divided by a partition which can be raised in case of a large gathering. The windows are gothic, of rolled cathedral glass, and most beautiful in design. The walls are frescoed, pews circular, pulpit, chancel and aisles carpeted, making it in every respect what many people call it—"A cosy little city church built in the country." The cost of the church is about $6000. The building committee consisted of the following: Abraham Taney, Christian Friday, Jesse Ash, Nathan Yeager, O. T. Taney, W. H. Yeager, A. E. Yeager, Jones Yeager, Elmer T. Prizer. A great deal of credit is due to the Ladies' Mite Society in furnishing the church, and to the financial committee, composed of Mrs. Andora Rapp, Lucetta Friday, Mary Brower, Alice Rowland, Amanda Yeager, and Misses Florence Taney, May Hipple and Mame Detwiler, in collecting the money for the church building.

The Sunday-school is the nursery of the church, and from the very beginning such an organization was maintained side by side with the church. Much of the increase in the present church-membership has

been drawn from it. It is but right, therefore, to make mention of the superintendent who labored faithfully among the young. The school was organized in the Spring of 1853 by its first superintendent, Davis Yeager. It then numbered 40 scholars—now it reaches 140. The others followed in the order named: Jesse Yeager, Abraham Taney, Jesse Ash, Frank M. Yeager, O. T. Taney, and at present, E. T. Prizer.

The prospects of the congregation for the future are most encouraging. A communicant membership of 125, a Sunday-school under the efficient management of its superintendent, E. T. Prizer, an interesting Y. P. S. C. E., a flourishing Ladies' Mite Society, and the most pleasant relation existing between pastor and people, should make this congregation a power for good in the salvation of souls for the Master.

ST. PAUL'S REFORMED CHURCH.

ST. PAUL'S REFORMED CHURCH.

UWCHLAN.

Many years ago, there stood on the triangular lot, directly opposite the present site of St. Paul's church, a building known as the "White School House." The date of its construction we have not been able to ascertain, but as far back as living memory reaches it was a land-mark of the community. Here in this school-house, hallowed by many recollections of tender and of sacred interest, the religious impulse of the community first erected an altar of worship to Almighty God.

In the summer of 1833, William Colton, a Presbyterian, and William Harrison, a Methodist, organized a Sunday-school, which was like the "grain of mustard seed"—small in its beginnings, but which, under God's providential care and blessing, grew to be a potent and ever-enlarging influence to this day. Out of that little Sunday-school, two congregations have sprung, two church buildings erected, and the work for the good of humanity and the glory of God is still actively carried on, both in the neighborhood of the White School House and by missionaries abroad.

In the year 1835 the Sunday-school work received

a vigorous impulse from the active zeal and intelligent leadership of Dr. Phillip Peltz, of Philadelphia, who became a resident in the neighborhood. He was a member of the Reformed church, a man of considerable intelligence, distinguished alike for his piety and his zeal in the Lord's work. He soon became an earnest worker in the Sunday-school. Such was the fervor of his spirit, that in a short time he had enlisted the interest and sympathy of nearly all the families in the neighborhood, who supported him with their aid and assistance, so that in a short time the school-house was too small to accommodate the people who assembled from Sabbath to Sabbath.

The influence of this Sunday-school was such as to awaken within the hearts of the people a desire for larger religious privileges. Accordingly, ministers of various denominations were invited to preach in the school-house at stated periods. Rev. Jesse B. Knipe, it seems, had been preaching to these people more or less regularly, since 1830. Rev. Frederick Ruthrauff, pastor of the Lutheran church at Pikeland, also conducted services here for several years previous to the permanent organization of a church. The religious community of St. Paul's consisted mostly of Lutheran and Reformed people belonging to one or the other of the Pikeland congregations. Being considerably removed by distance, and perhaps with limited opportunities to attend upon the means of grace, they would naturally have been interested in any movement look-

ing toward the organization of a church in their midst.

In any event, the zeal and interest manifested in these services and the work of the Sunday-school, the evident desire on the part of the people to have a permanent church home, made a house of worship a practical necessity.

As it would appear from the records, the leaders of both denominations proceeded with the work of building a church before organizing the congregations. At least, it is expressly stated that the meeting for the organization of the Reformed congregation was "held in the church." The names of some of those connected with this movement from the beginning, are: Peter Acker, Frederick Ruthrauff, John Davis, Elias Oberholtzer, John Stiteler, Moses Hartman, Samuel Fetters, George March, Peter Stiteler, Rev. Jesse B. Knipe. On February 9, 1838, a meeting was held at the house of Peter Acker to take into consideration the building of a house of public worship. John Stiteler was president of this meeting, and Rev. Frederick Ruthrauff, secretary. It was decided to erect a union church for the use of the Evangelical (afterwards changed to St. Paul's) Lutheran and Reformed congregations, in the vicinity of the "White School House." The site selected is the one on which the present St. Paul's church stands, and the ground was originally donated by Peter Stiteler. It was further decided at this meeting that each denomination keep its own treasury and pay its own half of the expenses. All

money collected from members of either denomination was to go into that treasury, while money contributed by members of neither denomination were to be divided into halves, unless specifically given by the donors to either one. Proposals were invited from different sources. The lowest being that of John Hartman, the contract was awarded to him for $1483, he to find all materials except the date stone and door sills; the service of delivering mortar to the masons was also to be provided for by the building committee. The work was pushed forward with considerable energy and zeal, and on the 5th of June, 1838, in the presence of a large assembly, the corner-stone, containing the customary documents, was laid. The following ministers were present on this occasion: Jesse B. Knipe, Frederick Ruthrauff, I. I. Graff, Presbyterian, of West Chester, and J. Ziegler, Reformed, of St. Matthew's. Rev. John Ruthrauff and Rev. I. I Graff preached appropriate sermons. Immediately after this event the work of its erection was resumed, and, under the care of a gracious providence, the church was reared and finished without anything of a serious nature taking place to excite sorrow or to cause regret, and on the 6th and 7th days of November, 1838, it was dedicated to the services of Almighty God. The folfowing ministers were present on the occasion: J. P. Hecht, of Easton; C. W. Shaffer, of Barren Hill; H. S. Miller, of Trappe; G. Mintzer, of West Vincent; C. Moore, of Vincent; J. Ziegler, of St. Matthew's. Rev.

Jesse B. Knipe, of the Reformed church, performed the dedicatory service. The season was a thronged and busy one among the farmers, yet it is said that the church was filled in every part during the two days and thrice a day.

The church home thus erected and dedicated, was built of stone, forty-five by thirty-eight feet, and one story high. There were two windows in the back of the house and three on each side, having twelve lights, twelve by sixteen inches. Two doors in the front served as places of entrance. The floor was in the shape of an inclined plane, having eighteen inches "dip" from the doors to the pulpit. Two aisles, running through the full length of the house, divided the pews into three rows.

Such, in brief, was the house that for forty-four years served as a holy place of worship and of prayer. With but a very few exceptions, all of those whose hearts and voices mingled in its opening services have passed that "bourne from which no traveler e'er returned."

On December 25, 1838, a meeting was held for the purpose of organizing the Reformed congregation. John Stiteler and Samuel Fetters were chosen as trustees, George March and Nicholas March as elders, and John Davis and Samuel March as deacons. At this meeting the Rev. Jesse B. Knipe was also officially recognized as pastor. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered the first time in this church

on May 6, 1839, to twenty communicants. The reader may be interested to know who they were. Their names are as follows: Jacob Acker, George March, Sr., George March, Jr., John Davis, John Labaugh, Nicholas March, Samuel March, Rebecca Davis, Eve Henry, Margaret Labaugh, Eve Fisher, Maria Davis, Maria Stiteler, Rebecca March, Catharine Smith, Ellen March, Catharine March, Mary March, Rebecca Davis, Ann March, James R. Douglass.

From this time on nothing eventful had taken place in the history of the congregation until 1852. The growth in membership was gradual, though the material seems to have been of a substantial character. In 1852 through some unfortunate disagreement of opinion, which, however, in the providence of God has been overruled for great good, the congregations decided to separate. The Lutheran congregation sold its interest in the buildings and grounds to the Reformed for $700, the former moving to Lionville, where a church was erected which has since become an influence for much good. For more than a score of years from this time on we find a great deal upon the records which was interesting, no doubt, in its time, but has little value as forming subject matter for history. It relates mostly to the transaction of routine business, but, at the same time, shows a genuine interest in the spiritual and temporal concerns of the church. The names most frequently found upon the minute book, are Daniel B. Lacy, Bohlen Peterman, John Fetters,

I. F. Snyder, Geo. W. Stine, Samuel Stiteler, F. Rhodewalt and James Marshall. Some of these seem to have served the church in about every capacity. Now it is the raising of pastor's salary, now it is the collecting of alms for the poor, or the arranging of cemetery lots, or the direction of workmen, or the repairing of property, etc. Always with a cheerful heart and a willing hand they seem to have served the church.

Father Knipe, having become infirm through age toward the close of this period, the desirability of an assistant in his pastoral labors was suggested to him. The idea met with his approval, and accordingly the services of two young men from the Ursinus Theological Seminary were secured. In this way the work was carried on until January 16, 1881, when Father Knipe tendered his resignation, having served in the ministry for over fifty years. The feelings of the congregation upon this extraordinary occasion are expressed in the following resolutions adopted at a meeting held for that purpose:

WHEREAS, The Rev. Jesse B. Knipe, after a pastorate of fifty years, in which, by his fidelity and zeal in the cause of the Master, he has been greatly endeared to us as a church, has now, on account of the infirmities of age which are pressing heavily upon him, seen fit to resign his office, and his resignation being by us accepted, it seems fit and proper that expression should be given to our feelings on this extraordinary occasion. Therefore, be it

Resolved, By the consistory and membership of St. Paul's Reformed Church, that we recognize with gladness the goodness of our Heavenly Father in so long sparing to us our aged pastor and father in Christ,

and humbly pray that with lessened care and responsibility, his life may yet be much prolonged to bless and cheer us in this vale of shadows.

Resolved, That while the official relation existing between us as pastor and people is dissolved, we feel that the Christian and fraternal relation will remain, and that we will gladly welcome him into our midst whenever, in the providence of God, he may be able to visit us.

Resolved, That we humbly trust that we as a people may be enabled to faithfully discharge the duties of the Christian life as we have been taught them, no less by his example than precept, and thus be fitted to finally share with him an eternity of bliss at God's right hand in Heaven.

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be engrossed and presented to Father Knipe, and that they also be published in the county papers.

D. B. Lacy,
B. Peterman,
G. W. Stine,
} *Committee.*

At the close of Father Knipe's active ministry, it was deemed to be to the best interests of both congregations that the former relations between St. Paul's and St. Peter's (Pikeland) cease. St. Peter's was afterward united with St. John's, Phœnixville, and St. Vincent, while St. Paul's remained a charge by itself. To the pastorate of this charge Rev. A. R. Thompson, of Hummelstown, Pa., was called on January 24, 1881. The union thus formed between pastor and people did not turn out to be a congenial one. Certain differences of opinion did not combine favorably toward harmony and peace, and it was deemed to the best interests of the congregation, that the pastoral relations cease. Rev. Thompson presented his resignation to take effect July 1, 1883.

On or about March 1, 1881, the congregation pur-

chased the house and lot now owned by E. Edward Super, from Richard Pearson, for the sum of $2500. This was used as a parsonage until May 4, 1885, when it was sold again to the original owner for the sum of $2100.

From July 1, 1883, continuing until June 15, 1884, the congregation was without a regular pastor. During a part of this time the pulpit was supplied with students from Ursinus Theological Seminary, but toward the close of the period the services, catechetical work, etc., were in charge of Rev. L. D. Stambaugh, then pastor of St. Matthew's.

The roof of the old church being in need of repairs, and there being a sentiment favorable to the erection of a house of worship better adapted to the needs of the congregation, it was thought a fitting time to bring the matter to the attention of the members. At a congregational meeting held on September 5, 1883, it was decided to erect a new church building. The following members were appointed as a building committee to take the matter in hand: John Fetters, Daniel B. Lacy, Jerome March, Frederick Rhodewalt and I. F. Snyder. The last services held in the old church were of a special character. They were held on Sunday, March 30, 1884. Rev. L. D. Stambaugh preached his farewell sermon, and Rev. W. T. Rentz, of the Lutheran, and Rev. Wm. Bull, of the Protestant Episcopal church, delivered short addresses. A short

history of the church since its organization was also read by the secretary.

Cheerful gifts, earnest hearts and willing hands, greatly facilitated the work, which was contracted for by Christian Woodland for $3500. The corner-stone was laid on April 19, 1884, Rev. S. P. Mauger preaching the sermon. The new building was entirely under roof when Rev. E. D. Wettach, of Reedsburg, Ohio, became supply pastor for St. Paul's and St. Matthew's, with the understanding that should the arrangement prove satisfactory at the end of one year, both should be united into one charge. Rev. Wettach was installed June 15, 1884, and at the next annual meeting of Classis, the two congregations were united into what is now known as St. Matthew's charge. On January 15, 1885, the new building was dedicated to the services of Almighty God, Rev. J. H. A. Bomberger, D. D., President of Ursinus College, preaching the sermon, while the dedicatory service was read by the pastor, Rev. E. D. Wettach. Rev. H. T. Spangler, of Trappe, preached the sermon in the evening.

The style of architecture for this new church is Gothic, forty by fifty-six feet, and two stories high. The doors and windows are trimmed with serpentine stone, which adds much to the outside appearance. On the first floor is a spacious hallway, a lecture room, an infant class room, and a library. The lecture room is furnished with moveable chairs. The main audience room is on the second floor, lighted by thirteen rolled

cathedral glass windows, which have been donated by the following parties: B. and C. Peterman, D. B. and C. Lacy, John and Elizabeth Fetters, Jerome March, Mrs. Malinda Acker, Mrs. Ann Davis and family (in memory of Madison Davis), the Stiteler family (in memory of their parents, John and Maria Stiteler), Geo. W. Stine and I. F. Snyder. The Sunday-school donated the one in memory of Rev. Jesse B. Knipe, also the two large and one of the small windows in front.

The seating of the main audience room is arranged in semi-circular style. The pews are of black walnut, cushioned, and the floor covered with a bright woolen carpet. The place for the choir is to the left of the pulpit as you enter. The seating capacity of this room, together with the gallery above the hallway, is about 300 persons. Altogether the building is neatly and fittingly furnished, and is one in which the congregation can justly take pride.

The cost of the building and furnishings, by the treasurer's account, amounted to $5,559.18. This, together with a half-interest in the handsome parsonage at Anselma, erected at a cost of $4500, has been entirely provided for by the congregation, leaving a balance on interest.

There have also been bequeathed to this church at various times, the following amounts: Jacob Acker, $500 (1843); Isaac Fetters, $500 (1861); Jacob Keely, $500 (1861); Jacob Acker, Jr., $500 (1876); Rev. Jesse B. Knipe, $500 (1884).

The congregation has never been strong in membership, but has always been able to meet its financial obligations. The membership seems to have reached its highest, numerically, during the pastorate of Rev. E. D. Wettach, when it numbered 120. At the time the present pastor was installed, the number of members was found to be about 100, which number has slightly increased. The present membership consists largely of young persons, whose active and intelligent interest in the Master's work bespeaks a useful future for this congregation.

The first organ was introduced into this church about the year 1877. The effect of this was to awaken the musical talent of the congregation which heretofore had found but limited opportunities for exercise. About three years ago, Mrs. E. A. Pommer, of Exton, Pa., actively interested herself in the work of the choir. She at once enlisted the sympathy of all, and the interest of those who recognized the value of the opportunity which was open to them. Since then regular choir meetings have been held once a week, the musical talent of the congregation has been wonderfully developed, so that the choir of St. Paul's has become an institution admired and spoken of by all who had and are still having the privilege of listening to its sweet strains.

On September 10, 1889, Rev. E. D. Wettach presented his resignation to take effect on the following October 1st. He removed to Akron, Ohio, where he

now has charge of Trinity Reformed Mission. His work here was successful and prosperous. On January 4, 1891, J. Lewis Fluck, then a student in Ursinus Theological Seminary, was unanimously elected as supply pastor, with a view of extending him a call to the pastorate after having completed his studies. The arrangement seemed satisfactory, and on May 12 the joint consistory extended a unanimous call from the St. Matthew's charge. He was ordained and installed at St. Paul's Reformed Church, June 16. The relation entered into at that time, so far as can be ascertained, still continues pleasant and profitable. The following are the officers of the church at this time: Trustees, John Fetters, Bohlen Peterman and J. Elwood Stiteler. Deacons, F. Rhodewalt, P. W. Himes, John Stine, E. Edward Super and James Marshall. Elders, Andrew Moore, Geo. W. Stine, Daniel B. Lacy and Samuel Stiteler.

The Sunday-school, which was the forerunner of the church, still continues to support her interests by its efficient work in the line of Biblical study. The names of its superintendents from the beginning are William Colton, John Davis, Madison Davis, John Stiteler, Daniel B. Lacy, Isaiah Snyder, and the present superintendent, Geo. W. Stine. The present organization is made up of human beings at all stages of life—children, whose little feet have just climbed out of the cradle; youth, standing upon the threshold of life's opening door; mature life, on whose shoulders

rests the heat and burden of the day; and old age, reading with increased interest the words, "and I saw a *new* heaven and a *new* earth." All are assembled from Sabbath to Sabbath, to find out the meaning and purpose of life from Him who said "Learn of Me."

SHENKEL'S REFORMED CHURCH.

During the early years of the world's history, God made men's lives so long that they could tell the events of one generation to the children of the next. Mankind, then, it seems, possessed a memory sufficiently tenacious to retain what they thus heard. But in our own age, men no longer depend upon memory. Everything must be recorded in books and writing, so that it becomes an easy matter to refer at once to the history of any event or circumstance.

In writing the history of Shenkel's Reformed Church, the work would have been greatly facilitated had we in our possession any such written records. Our only sources of information are the traditions that are in possession of the present generation, and such facts as could be remembered by two aged members of the old church. To a certain extent this is uncertain, but we have sifted it, and what is here given is in brief the history of Shenkel's church.

Prior to the year 1835, no regular religious services were held in this part of Chester county. About this time, however, Rev. John C. Guldin, pastor of Brownback's and other Reformed churches in Chester county, held occasional services in what is now called Shen-

kel's school-house, and also in the village of Stump Town, now called Cedarville. For about two years, Rev. Guldin labored in this community, and aroused considerable interest among the people. The field was large, and the opportunity for doing good was encouraging, so that the people decided to have the means of grace administered more frequently and with greater regularity.

With this end in view, a public meeting was held in the house of Edward Posey, to consider the advisability of organizing a German Reformed church. This meeting was well attended and a lively interest manifested by all. It was accordingly decided to form a congregation which should be known as "The Second German Reformed Church in Coventry township." At that time there was but one township where now there are three.

Henry Sabold, Jr., and Philip Kingkerger were elected elders of the church, and Edward Posey and Lewis Spiese were elected deacons, all of whom were duly ordained and installed into their offices by Rev. John C. Guldin, on December 11, 1837.

About this time a series of special evangelistic meetings were held, when the spirit of God was poured out on the people, and many conversions took place, eleven of whom united with the church.

For some time the members had been contemplating the building of a house of worship. The accommodations afforded by the school-house were no longer

sufficient to meet the demands of the growing congregation. Accordingly, at a meeting of the congregation held on January 1, 1838, a proposition for building a house of worship was submitted and finally accepted. A committee consisting of Henry Spiese and Edward Posey were to erect a building suitable to the needs of the congregation.

The committee purchased a small tract of land from the farm known as Shenkel's farm, since made memorable by the committal of a brutal murder. The grandfather of the present treasurer of the congregation, Henry Spiese, who was deeply interested in the work and may be called the father of the church, was appointed builder. Ever since the organization of the congregation, the office of treasurer was held by Spieses, with the exception of a few years. Plans were soon agreed upon, and willing hands and hearts took hold of the work and carried it forward, so that on Whit Monday, June 4, 1838, the corner-stone was laid. A copy of the Old and New Testament, a hymn-book of the German Reformed church, a Heidelberg catechism, and a constitution of the German Reformed Church in North America, were placed in it. The officiating ministers on that occasion were Rev. John C. Guldin, who preached from Matt. 21, 44: and Rev. Jacob Ziegler, who preached from Col. 1, 28. The work was pushed forward with rapidity, and completed in the winter of the same year. The dedicatory ser-

mon was preached by Rev. John C. Guldin. The total cost of lot, building, etc., was $1734.21.

Of those who started the church in 1837, but two remain—Mr. Samuel Rigg and Mr. Jacob S. Root, one of the carpenters who aided in building the first church.

For some time after Rev. Guldin ceased his work here, the congregation was without any regular minister, being supplied by different men. Early in the forties Rev. E. D. Smith preached for the people. Being inclined toward Methodism and advocating the same, a division sprang up in the congregation, and each party made strenuous efforts to keep possession of the church. Up to this time the congregation had not been incorporated. The dissenting party seized upon this as their opportunity to gain possession, and at once set about securing a charter. But the Reformed people forestalled them in this by arriving in Chester one day before their opponents, thus saving to the Reformed church a congregation which has proved itself a zealous and earnest people. The charter was granted on the 7th day of August, 1843.

Those who were not satisfied with the Reformed mode of worship, took their departure, leaving but a half-dozen families to carry on the work. But the Lord was with the faithful few in Zion, and greatly blessed them. Shortly after this disturbance, the Methodists built a church on an eminence a short distance north of Shenkel's, and called it the Temple

M. E. Church. At this time a brotherly feeling exists between the pastors and people of both churches.

The following ministers, of whom little information can be found, supplied the pulpit until 1855: Revs. Jacob W. Hougen, Andrew S. Young, John S. Folk, W. R. Work and David Hefflefinger.

On January 24, 1855, Rev. William Sorber was called to the pastorate of this charge, which then consisted of three churches, viz: Brownback's, Shenkel's and St. Peter's.

During the years 1866 and 1867, special meetings were held in the church, and many accessions were made. During the latter part of Rev. Sorber's ministry here, it became evident that the work of looking after three churches extending over so large a territory, was too much for one man, and his health began to fail. The congregations then decided to secure an assistant for Mr. Sorber. His son, Rev. Geo. S. Sorber, now located in Watsontown, Pa., had then just completed his Theological studies at Ursinus College, and the congregations, thinking that no better person could be found, called him to become the assistant to his father in June, 1878. The last year of his life Mr. Sorber was unable to preach much. On December 7, 1878, the Lord called him higher to receive his reward and the "well done" of his Master, whom he had served so long and faithfully. His ministry to this people continued through twenty-three years. Not only was he beloved by the members of his congrega-

tions, but by his warm and genial character he ingratiated himself in the hearts of every one with whom he came in contact. "Though dead, he yet speaketh" in the lives and characters he endeavored to mould into the image of his Lord; and in the judgment day many will rise up and call his name blessed.

Rev. Geo. S. Sorber was called to the pastorate in January, 1879, and continued pastor of this charge until February, 1886. The old church, though hallowed by memories of the past, and precious to the hearts of the aged, had become antiquated, so that during Rev. Sorber's pastorate it was decided to enlarge and remodel it. In the months of July and August, 1884, the old building was torn down to the floor, and the work of rebuilding was at once begun. So rapid was the work, that by September 30, 1884, the members of the congregation were ready to lay the corner-stone. Rev. Geo. S. Sorber was assisted on this occasion by Rev. L. K. Evans, of Trinity Reformed Church, Pottstown, who preached the sermon. By December 21, the basement of the church was completed and dedicated with appropriate ceremonies. By the Spring of 1885, the auditorium was ready for occupancy, and was dedicated to the service of God on March 15, 1885. Notwithstanding the fact that the day was dull and rainy, the church was filled with an interested and appreciative audience. The late Rev. J. H. A. Bomberger, D. D., then president of Ursinus College, preached the dedicatory sermon from the text, Ezra

6, 16. Revs. E. D. Wettach and John Landis also assisted at the service.

The present structure is Gothic in style, and in size is fifty-four by forty-one and one-half feet, with a basement for the Sunday-school thirty-three by forty-one and one-half feet. The windows are of rolled cathedral glass, the floor is carpeted, the pews cushioned, and the walls beautifully frescoed. The total cost of the building was about $3,300. Nearly all this sum was paid by the time of dedication. Three hundred dollars, however, remain, but the consistory is now making an effort to clear out this debt, and it is hoped that before another year has come this will be a thing of the past.

On June 20, 1886, Rev. Jas. W. Meminger was ordained and installed pastor of this charge, but after a stay of little more than one year, he resigned to accept a call to St. Paul's, Lancaster, where he is now laboring with much success.

In September, 1887, Rev. A. D. Wolfinger, then a student in Ursinus Theological Seminary, began to supply the congregation until November 20, 1887, when he was elected pastor, to begin his work upon the completion of his studies. On June 3, 1888, he was installed pastor of the charge in this church. The sermon was preached by Rev. E. D. Wettach. During Rev. Wolfinger's pastorate, a movement was set on foot to divide the charge, as one man could not give proper attention to the spiritual needs of the people. Up to this time, preaching service was held

only every other week. Finally, after much debate, Philadelphia Classis, at a special meeting held in Philadelphia, January 15, 1891, divided the charge, for the time leaving this church by itself. Rev. Wolfinger is now successfully laboring in Thornville, Ohio.

St. Paul's Reformed Church, Birdsboro, was about to become vacant, and Philadelphia Classis petitioned Lebanon Classis to cede this church to them with the purpose of uniting it with Shenkel's, and thus form a self-sustaining charge. Lebanon Classis granted the request, but after much negotiation it was deemed inadvisable to unite the two churches, and St. Paul's church was returned to Lebanon Classis. Shenkel's was again left alone. The people of this church were growing despondent, and about ready to succumb to the inevitable. "It's an ill wind, however, that does not blow some one good.". The troubles of the congregation awakened the people, and they possessed their souls in patience and determined to succeed. About this time the present pastor, Rev. W. H. Stubblebine began to supply the congregation, and finally, in July, a congregational meeting was held, and a unanimous vote was cast for Rev. W. H. Stubblebine. It was impossible, however, for the congregation to support a man themselves, and a petition was sent to Philadelphia Classis for sustentation. At a special meeting, classis did not see its way clear to grant the request, and made a second attempt to unite the church with St. Peter's (Warwick) but after much debate this was dropped as inadvisable. Finally, through the liberality

of an elder in Heidelberg church, Philadelphia, who promised to give $50 toward the first year's sustentation, classis granted the request. This was good news to the members, and at once inspired them with new courage. Rev. W. H. Stubblebine accepted the call, and on Sabbath afternoon, August 2, 1891, was ordained to the gospel ministry and installed as pastor of this congregation by Rev. Jas. I. Good, D. D., of Reading, and Rev. John Sechler, of Philadelphia.

The first work that demanded instant attention was the thorough organization of the church forces. The consistory was increased from four to eight, and a set of By-Laws were adopted and printed in connection with the Constitution of the church. Services are now held every Sabbath, church prayer meeting is held every week, and an active Y. P. S. C. E. is held every Sabbath evening.

Among other things that demanded immediate attention, was the Sunday-school. This department of the church had run down completely, and there was little prospect of building it up unless the Sunday-school room could be remodeled. The entire room was in a dilapidated condition. The officers and teachers of the school were organized into a permanent association, and they at once began to lay plans for the remodeling of the room. Money to the amount of $89 was collected by subscription to pay for new chairs. To secure sufficient funds to make the contemplated alteration, it was decided to hold an "Apron Bazaar" in Pottstown, on November 13 and 14, 1891.

The services of the Ursinus College Glee Club were called into requisition, and aided very much to make it a success. Nearly $150 were realized from the bazaar, which, with moneys realized from other sources, gave the association nearly $300 to expend in the work.

As soon as the money was assured, work was begun and carried on until the whole room was completely transformed. The most gratifying thing about it all was the good will and earnestness that animated one and all. In union there is strength.

The room was formally dedicated on Sunday Jan. 3, 1892, by the pastor, with a sermon on Neh. iv, 6. The room is now beautiful and attractive and a hearty interest is manifest by all.

For three weeks, beginning Jan. 11, 1892, special evangelistic services were held in this church. The pastor was assisted in these meetings on three nights by Rev. Dr. Good, Rev. Dr. Williard and Rev. Rufus Miller. A feeling of deep interest and solemnity was manifest in these meetings and the Holy Spirit was mightily at work in convicting sinners. The meetings concluded on Sunday, Jan. 31, with the Lord's Supper and the reception of new members. Twelve were added by profession of faith, one of whom was an old man 82 years of age, who thinks nothing of walking three miles to church. Two were added by renewal of profession and three by letter, making in all seventeen.

The past is encouraging, the present prosperous and the future full of bright hopes, which it is hoped will, under the blessing of God, become living realities.

ST. JOHN'S REFORMED CHURCH.

PHOENIXVILLE, PA.

The history of this congregation dates from 1849. At that time many things favored the organization of a Reformed church in Phœnixville. Many Reformed people were then living in and around the borough. On May 14th, 1848, Rev. A. B. Shenkle, then pastor of East Vincent Reformed Church, began preaching in the Mennonite Church, corner of Church and Main streets, now occupied by the Central Lutheran Congregation. Afterward services were held in Temperance Hall.

A congregation was organized in February, 1849, under the name and title of St. John's Reformed Church, Phœnixville, Pa. It was incorporated according to law May 6, 1849. At the first communion service held, there were thirty-five members in good and regular standing.

In the year 1850 a church building was erected in the North ward, on corner of High and Marshall streets, where the congregation worshiped for eighteen years. Rev. A. B. Shenkle was pastor of the congregation during the greater part of this time. Rev. William Sorber, pastor of Brownback's Reformed Church,

served the congregation for a time. Afterward Rev. Fulton became its pastor. Under his pastorate, however, the congregation became divided and greatly weakened. Rev. Fulton and a portion of the congregation finally connected themselves with the Presbyterian church.

Rev. A. B. Shenkle then again endeavored to keep the congregation together, but after a period of five years the congregation disbanded.

An indebtedness of fourteen hundred dollars was resting on the church property at that time. The members of the congregation still interested in the church were few, and were unable to meet the payments, and so the church building was allowed to be sold. The building is now used as a dwelling.

During fifteen or more years which followed the disbanding of the congregation in the North ward, no services were held by the Reformed people in Phœnixville, although a number of members continued in the Reformed faith.

All this time the town was steadily growing larger and Reformed people were moving into the borough from the surrounding country, and it was evident to those interested that there should be a Reformed congregation in such a town with so much Reformed material in and around it. To Mr. Franklin M. Yeager is due the starting of the new organization. He was a man thoroughly interested in the work of the Reformed church, and loyal to her interests. He was

at that time a resident of the borough and a member of St. Vincent Reformed Church, East Vincent, Pa.

In conferring with others concerning the project, he at first met with little or no encouragement. But not disheartened he sought the counsel and help of Rev. J. H. A. Bomberger, D. D., LL. D., President of Ursinus College, Collegeville, Pa., who at once agreed to meet the Reformed people of Phœnixville and inquire into the possibility of such an enterprise. The day appointed for the meeting, January 13, 1882, proved to be a stormy day, and the meeting was postponed to the following Tuesday, January 17, 1882. At that time Dr. Bomberger preached to the people in the church formerly owned by the United Brethren Congregation, but lately sold to private individuals. After the service a committee was appointed to confer with the neighboring pastors concerning the re-organization of St. John's Reformed Congregation, of Phœnixville, Pa.

On January 20, 1882, action was taken looking to the purchase of United Brethren Church on Gay street and books were prepared to solicit contributions. On April 27th, of the same year, it was decided to purchase the United Brethren Church from Theo. F. Hunter for the sum of thirty-seven hundred dollars. Z. Acker, Samuel Lloyd and John Hipple were appointed a purchasing committee. On May 29th the committee reported that seven hundred dollars were subscribed toward the purchase of the property. A

Sabbath School was organized May 14, 1882, with Franklin M. Yeager as superintendent. About this time Rev. M. S. Rowland was secured to preach in the church until fuller organization could be effected. A. D. Hawke, John Hipple, Samuel Lloyd, David Buckwalter, Mahlon Miller, Z. Acker and Frank M. Yeager were elected trustees, and a committee was appointed to attend Philadelphia Classis, and ask for the re-organization of the Phœnixville congregation. Philadelphia Classis at the annual meeting granted the request and appointed Revs. J. H. A. Bomberger, D. D., D. W. Ebert and M. S. Rowland the committee on reorganization. The committee met in Phœnixville on June 7, 1882, and completed the organization with twenty communicant members. At the same time A. D. Hawke, F. M. Yeager and Z. Acker were elected Elders and I. R. Francis, John Miller and Robert Johnson were elected Deacons of the congregation.

On June 18, 1882, the building was dedicated as a Reformed church to the worship of God. Rev. James I. Good, D. D., of Philadelphia, preached the dedicatory sermon. Thus the revived congregation with a small though united and determined membership, began under favoring circumstances a new course with a flattering promise of a successful future. Rev. M. S. Rowland continued to serve the congregation until November, 1882.

Rev. S. P. Mauger, pastor of St. Vincent and St. Peter's, Pikeland, charge, was then appointed to supply

the pulpit on Sabbath evenings, while Rev. J. B. Knipe was appointed to preach on Sabbath mornings whenever his health would permit.

By a reconstruction of neighboring charges in the Spring of 1886, St. John's Reformed Church of Phœnixville and St. Peter's church of Pikeland, were constituted a pastoral charge, with Rev. S. P. Mauger as its pastor. From that time until October 1, 1888, Rev. Mauger served the charge acceptably and successfully. Through his untiring zeal and devotion, a good work was accomplished and the congregation was placed on a substantial basis. One thousand dollars of the indebtedness was paid and the church property improved. Forty-nine members were added to the membership. Rev. Mauger left the work in a prosperous condition.

Rev. James R. Lewis served the charge from November, 1888, until June, 1889. He was elected pastor but was not installed. During that time, fourteen were added to the membership of the church, and successful work was accomplished in the interest of the congregation.

Rev. F. C. Yost, the present pastor, took charge of the congregation November 1, 1889. Through a reconstruction of neighboring charges by action of Philadelphia Classis, this congregation became a separate pastoral charge on November 1, 1890, and has since then received the exclusive attention and work of the pastor. The congregation has steadily increased in

membership and activity. During the two years of Rev. Yost's pastorate, seventy-six were added to the church, making the membership at present one hundred and thirty-one.

The Sabbath-school is well equipped with good active officers and teachers, and has an enrollment of over two hundred scholars. One thousand dollars have been paid on the indebtedness, leaving a comparatively small amount yet to be provided for. A number of important improvements in and about the church have been made at an expense of three hundred and fifty dollars. The church property at present is worth fully seven thousand dollars.

The church has been growing spiritually as well as numerically and financially. A vigorous Women's Missionary Society is maintained. A Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor is doing an excellent work among the young people, and is exerting a good influence upon the entire congregation. The future of the congregation is full of promise, for with God's blessing it must grow in strength and usefulness.

THE FIRST REFORMED CHURCH.

SPRING CITY.

The First Reformed Church of Spring City is a fact and factor. In the ten years of its existence, it has grown from a comparatively small body into a large and aggressive organization. Where ten years ago was found a lot given over to weeds and tares, there is to-day a beautiful and substantial house of worship. Where ten years ago the Reformed people were scattered far and wide, they are to-day united in one body of earnest, faithful workers. The stream of Christian influence, which is ever-widening and deepening, has had its source. The effect, manifest in the interest and activity of the members, has had a cause. What is it?

Primarily, we should say the source was the hearts and minds of those who formed the nucleus from which has come the present body; those who conceived the idea and labored for its realization. And the cause was a deeply felt need of a more united effort, of more frequent services and closer church relations. When, in 1881, Rev. D. W. Ebbert was called to the pastorate of the East Vincent charge, the nearest point for the Reformed people to worship was

two miles distant. Having taken up his residence in Spring City, he was soon made to realize the fact, through the encouragement of those who had importuned his predecessor to organize a congregation, that there was an excellent opening to begin a good work. The field was white to harvesting. That such was the case is readily learned from the fact that when, on June 15, 1881, a Sunday-school was organized, it opened with thirty members. In connection with the starting of the school, Rev. Ebbert began to preach regularly every Sunday evening in Mechanics' Hall.

The interest, because of the great demand for a Reformed church, has from the very outset been deep and lasting. This bears its own testimony to the statement that all that was needed in the early days was some one to lead. God smiled with favor upon all efforts. In the words of one who has watched with loving interest the growth of the congregation—"When things looked dark, progress was discouraging, and all avenues apparently closed, God, just at the most opportune time, raised up friends and enabled us to solve the difficult problems." It must not be inferred from this that its history is a history of severe trials, of hard struggles, of being crushed by successive defeats. It is rather the history of a man whose every step has been one of progress, who perhaps momentarily has faced some great difficulty, but by concentration of thought and energy has made it yield him success. In the history of its career, we

find they all worked together in sweet accord. The numbers in school and public services soon began to increase, and a great impetus was given to the new movement. Through the efforts of Miss Mary Kimes and the generosity of Mr. O. B. Keeley, who, though not a member of the church, was deeply interested in the work, an organ was placed at the service of school and church.

A second step of importance was taken in March, 1882. Believing that the time had arrived for more definite action looking toward a regular organization, a committee consisting of Messrs. Jos. Keeley, Thomas Francis, Francis Latschar, Henry Francis and Henry J. Diehl was appointed to confer with the East Vincent congregation on the subject of forming a charge. The result of the conference was the granting of thirty letters of dismissal to members of this church, for the purpose of founding a new congregation in Spring City. Rev. Ebbert and Elder Alexander Hoffman were empowered by the Philadelphia Classis to effect an organization, which was accomplished April 25, 1882, when thirty members of the "mother church" and seventeen others, forty-seven in all, were admitted to full membership. At a congregational meeting held the same day, the newly formed church proceeded to elect its officers. Messrs. C. S. Francis, Davis Kimes and George Snyder were made elders, and Messrs. Henry Francis, James Rogers and Andrew McMichael were made deacons. Of this number, Mr.

Henry Francis has served as an active member of the consistory, either in the capacity of deacon or elder, from its foundation. Messrs. C. S. Francis and Geo. Snyder have been made honorary members. Messrs. James Rogers and Andrew McMichael have been succeeded by others, and of the original number, one, Mr. Davis Kimes, has gone to his reward.

The newly constituted charge immediately began the work of providing a suitable home for their pastor. Through the kindness and liberality of Mr. Henry Francis, a lot was provided for this purpose and necessary steps taken to erect a building. In a short time a large and substantial house was placed at the service of Rev. Ebbert. Services were still conducted at the hall, with the growing conviction, however, that larger and more commodious quarters must be provided for the growing interest. The question began to press hard, and the subject of a church home demanded serious consideration. At this juncture, Mrs. Mary E. Keeley, who has always had the interests of the cause at heart, came forward with the proposition that she would give $1000 on condition that two others pledge themselves for like sums. Mr. Jos. Keeley and Mr. Henry Francis accepted the terms and subscribed equal amounts. A fund was thus started, and the prospects were so encouraging that a committee was appointed to procure a site. This having been attended to, and the lot upon which the building now stands having been secured for $1000, a second committee

was appointed to have plans drafted for the proposed building. Before these plans were presented for consideration, Rev. Ebbert sailed for Europe, to be gone three months. Shortly after his departure, the committee reported and the plans presented by Mr. Jos. Keeley were adopted. Messrs. Jos. Keeley, Henry Francis and George Snyder composed the building committee and were given instructions to carry out the proposed plans. The work was under the personal over-sight and superintendency of Mr. Jos. Keeley.

There was no time lost in setting the project in motion, and by June 21, 1884, everything was in readiness for the laying of the corner-stone. In the absence of the pastor, who was still abroad, Rev. D. E. Klopp, D. D., and Rev. S. P. Mauger, officiated at the ceremony. The building was now rapidly pushed forward. About July 15 Rev. Ebbert, after an absence of three months, during which time most of the funds were collected, the plans adopted, the work begun and corner-stone laid, returned to resume his pastoral relations. After seven months more of preaching in the hall, the congregation, amid much rejoicing, moved from their close and cramped quarters to the lecture room of the new building. Here the first services were held on Christmas day, 1884. The work of completing the edifice was carried forward until March, 1885, when the committee was permitted to render a report of their labors and turn over the result of their efforts to a waiting congregation. At this meeting it

was shown that a debt of $3455.73 rested on the church. Desirous of dedicating the edifice free of all debt, an effort was made to secure the required sum. A subscription list was opened, when Mr. Keeley agreed to double his original sum on condition that the entire debt be cancelled in a week. Mr. Henry Francis, Mrs. Mary E. Keeley and Mrs. Anna Keeley raised another $1000. At a congregational meeting held for the purpose of soliciting funds, the sum was raised. Preparations were now made for the dedicatory services. April 2, 1885, was the day set apart for this most interesting and solemn ceremony. Dr. J. H. A. Bomberger, President of Ursinus College, preached a characteristic sermon on the theme, "Dedication an Occasion for Rejoicing." The other pastors present at this service were D. E. Klopp, D. D., Revs. H. T. Spangler, S. P. Mauger, E. D. Wettach, G. S. Sorber, B. F. Davis, L. K. Evans, and Rev. Ebbert. The Lutheran church was represented by Rev J. Neff, and the Baptist by Rev. Lyons. At the communion season on Easter Sunday following, thirty-one new names were added to the roll, making the total membership at that time ninety-five.

The First Reformed Church stands one-half block west of Main, on Chestnut street. It occupies the centre of a lot, 80 by 110 feet, the building itself being 41 by 74 feet. Externally, it is neat and attractive. Its appearance does not indicate thoughtless extravagance on the one hand, nor indifferent economy on

the other. Built of light brown stone, with gray stone corners and trimmings of gothic architecture, it combines beauty with simplicity, the ornamental with the useful, reflecting credit alike on the judgment of the committee and the taste of the congregation. The first impression gained on viewing the edifice prepares one for the internal arrangement. Everything harmonizes. Entering the first floor by the side entrance, one is ushered into a well-proportioned and comfortably sized lecture room. Here are held the Sunday-school and mid-week services. On the same floor, but separated from it by sliding windows, are a parlor and library room, and the infant department. The main and infant rooms are furnished with settees of an improved style, which aid much in making the rooms inviting. Passing up a short flight of stairs from the infant room, you stand in the vestibule which is entered from without by a flight of granite steps. The floor of the main room is reached by a short stairway. Opening the swinging doors and looking up the main aisle, one is impressed with the cheerfulness of the room, the blending of the colors from the rolled cathedral glass windows having a pleasing effect. At night the room is lighted with gas, through two chandeliers and thirteen side lights. Assembly chairs, seating three hundred; a fine organ, the gift of Mrs. Anna Keeley; and the pulpit and altar furniture, the gift of Mrs. Mary E. Keeley, complete the furnishing of the auditorium. The frescoing is artistic, the early morning scene being especially worthy of mention.

Rev. Ebbert ministered to the flock with all fidelity until July, 1887. Feeling that his work was accomplished, and believing himself called to a new field of missionary enterprise, he resigned his charge to accept a call to Dayton. This was a severe blow. The new congregation was but fairly launched in active church work, and was in need of one to stand at the head as leader. But the cause of the Lord was not to suffer, the interest be abated, nor the zeal languish. After having been without a pastor for four months, during which time the pulpit was supplied by students from Ursinus Seminary and possible candidates, Rev. L. G. Kremer was called December 5, 1887, and took up his labors January 1, 1888, his pastorate covering a period of two years and a half.

During the ministry of Rev. Kremer, final action was taken to become a separate charge. In March, 1890, a set of resolutions drafted and adopted by the consistory, favoring a dissolution of the relations existing between the East Vincent and Spring City congregations, was presented to that body for consideration, when it was decided to petition classis for a division. At the annual meeting, held May 15, 1890, this petition was granted, and Spring City was constituted a pastoral charge, to take effect January 1, 1891. Through the death of Rev. Kremer, however, which occurred in August, it was deemed advisable to make the change in October rather than wait until the New Year. This was accomplished. The old parsonage was sold, all accounts closed, and the congregation

began life and work as a self-supporting and independent body.

A move was now made to secure the regular services of a pastor, with the result that in January, 1891, a call was given to Licentiate Calvin Derr, then a student in Yale Seminary. This having been accepted, the congregation once again felt settled, and began work with renewed zeal. Though practically without the leadership of a pastor, and with the new experience of being independent, the work was not suffered to go down, nor the interest to die out. During the eight months intervening between the death of Rev. Kremer and the entering upon his duties of the present pastor, services were conducted regularly twice a day. The Sunday-school was kept in an excellent condition, the mid-week services held without interruption, and a Christian Endeavor Society organized. The only explanation for such marked activity and such unusual zeal is found in the fact that the congregation was of one mind and one heart. Having completed the arrangements for a leader and pastor, the subject of erecting a suitable house was taken up for consideration. The movement was started by Mr. Henry Francis, who headed the subscription list with $300. In a short time the amount was raised, plans secured, contract awarded, and the work begun, a lot 80 by 110 feet having been presented for the purpose by Mrs. Anna Keeley.

Such is the all too brief history of ten years of church work and labor for the Master. The sketch is neces-

sarily incomplete, though, we trust, not inaccurate, nor lacking in the main points. Our task of presenting anything like a consecutive growth and development was made the more arduous because of the absence of historical material. The most available data was the minute book and some facts published at the time of dedication. From these sources we have gleaned the above history.

One word in closing. The present pastor assumed the duties and responsibilities of his position immediately on leaving the seminary. He came to minister to a people who had been blessed with talented, clear-sighted, and consecrated servants of the Master. His predecessors labored faithfully and earnestly, and their labors were crowned with success. Ordained and installed June 7, 1891, he began his ministry amid many misgivings and great encouragement. In the year which has come and gone, pastor and people labored together, and we trust with no little pleasure and profit. The existing relations are warm and tender. There is a reciprocal feeling of confidence and good will which seems to indicate a strengthening of ties and a deepening of interest. The present outlook is bright and hopeful, and the present condition healthy and encouraging.

"FAIRVIEW."

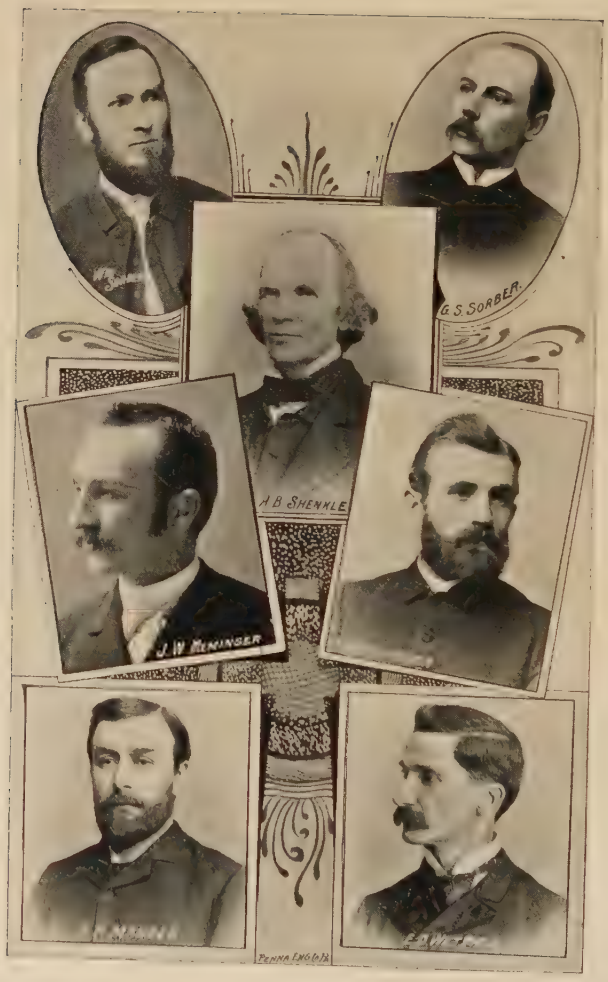
Parsonage, First Reformed Church, Spring City, Pa.

"FAIRVIEW."

THE PARSONAGE OF THE FIRST REFORMED CHURCH.

"Fairview," the name given to the new parsonage, is surely not a misnomer. The view which it commands can, for beauty and grandeur of scenery, scarcely be surpassed in the Schuylkill valley. The building itself is of the cottage style. Some idea of its external appearance may be gained from the accompanying cut. Internally, the arrangements are complete, and are a model for the combination of the comfortable and the useful. Entering from the front, you find yourself in a large open hall-way, finished in oak. A door to the right admits you into a spacious parlor, which connects by folding doors with the sitting-room, which is of comfortable size with bay window and side entrance. The dining-room on the west side is large and well lighted, and is connected with the sitting-room by means of sliding doors. These, with a well arranged kitchen provided with range and hot and cold water attachments, complete the first floor. The second floor contains two bed-rooms, study on the east side, a sewing-room, storage-room, and a

bath-room complete in its arrangements. There are three sleeping apartments on the third floor. The cost of the building was $3300. Private gifts from individual members have, however, enhanced the value of the property.



SOME FORMER PASTORS OF THE REFORMED CHURCHES IN CHESTER COUNTY.

BIOGRAPHICAL.

The following series of epitomized sketches embraces only those ministers (with one exception) who have labored as pastors of the Reformed church in Chester county since 1850.

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Derr, Calvin U. O. Born in Tamaqua, Pa., and spent early life in the coal regions and at Slatington, Pa. Attended the high school at the latter place for a number of years. Moved to Reading in 1881, and spent three years as secretary in the service of the Reading Hardware Company. Entered Ursinus College in 1884, and graduated class of '88. Finished a three years' theological course in Yale Divinity School, and graduated with the degree of B. D. in May, 1891. Ordained and installed into the pastorate of the First Reformed Church, Spring City, Pa., June 7, 1891, where he continues his ministry at this time.

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Ebbert, D. W. Only son of Jacob and Elizabeth Ebbert, born at Everett, Bedford county, Pa., June 11, 1853. The public schools of his native town, the Collegiate Institute at Martinsburg, Pa., and private instruction in the Classics by Prof. J. W. Hughes, A.

M., prepared him for admission into the junior class of Ursinus College, where he graduated in 1875. Studied Theology at the same institution, and in May, 1876, was licensed to preach the gospel by Philadelphia Classis. Ordained and installed as pastor of the Reformed Church at Shippensburg, Pa., November 18, 1876. Became pastor of East Vincent Reformed Church in Chester county, May 1, 1881. Organized the First Reformed Church, Spring City, of which he became pastor in August, 1877. Pastor of Trinity Reformed Church, Dayton, O., 1877–1890. Of St. John's Reformed Church, Milton, Pa., January, 1890, to the present time. Appointed by synod as one of the editors of Sunday-school Lessons Helps for the Reformed church, September, 1888.

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Fisher, Isaac Calvin. Born near Mt. Aetna, Berks county, Pa., October 16, 1867. Attended the public schools of his native county, Oley Academy, and the K. S. N. S., Kutztown, Pa. Taught in the public schools of his native county, 1882–1883. Studied at Palatinate College, Myerstown, Pa., 1884 to 1886. Entered the freshman class at Ursinus College, April, 1886, and graduated from the classical course of said institution, June, 1889, and from the theological department in May, 1891. During his last year in the seminary, he received a unanimous call to the pastorate of East Vincent—Pikeland—charge, where he was ordain-

ed and installed, June 11, 1891, by a committee of Philadelphia Classis, consisting of Revs. J. H. Sechler, F. C. Yost and C. B. Alspach.

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Fluck, J. Lewis. Born near Church Hill, Pa., September 17, 1864. Early life spent on a farm. Apprenticed to learn the shoemaker's trade from 1877 to 1879. Served full apprenticeship in the milling business, and subsequently followed steam engineering until January 7, 1882, when he entered the academic department of Ursinus College. Entered college in the fall of 1884, and graduated with the class of '88. Student at Yale Divinity School, New Haven, Conn., '88 to '89. At Union Theological Seminary, New York, '89 to '90. Labored as a missionary in South Dakota during the Summer of '90, and graduated from Ursinus Theological Seminary with the degree of B. D., '91. Received a unanimous call to the pastorate of St. Matthew's charge, May 12, '91. Was ordained and installed June 16, '91, where he continues his ministry to this time.

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Guldin, John C., D. D. Born in Exeter township, Berks county, Pa., August, 1799. Early education, such as the country schools then afforded. Training for the ministry under the direction of Rev. F. L. Herman for a period of five years. Licensed and ordained to preach the gospel September 28, 1820, by the synod

of the German Reformed church, then in session at Hagerstown, Md. Installed as pastor of Trappe, East Vincent and Brownback's congregations about the same time. Member of the "Independent Synod" from 1822 to 1836. Organized Shenkel's Reformed Church, 1836. Served St. Matthew's Reformed Church, 1833 to 1835. Accepted a call to Grindstone Hill charge, Franklin county, 1841. Was installed as pastor of the German Evangelical Church, New York city, 1842. Published a volume of practical sermons, and arranged a German hymn-book, which was approved by the authorities of the church; also completed a smaller collection of German hymns just before his death. Died, February 18, 1863. A man of great power, of earnest, though (in his earlier years) mistaken zeal, who often stood before his people, a weeping prophet, his tears mingling with his entreaties. His death was the grand finale of an earnest and devoted life.

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Hilbish, Henry. Born at Freeburg, Snyder county, Pa., September 13, 1836, and is of German descent. Educated at Freeburg Academy, with the exception of his theological training, which he received from private tutors. Ordained to the gospel ministry at the age of twenty-one years. First twenty years of his ministry principally spent in Ohio and Illinois. Accepted a call from the Manhime charge, York

county, Pa., in the Fall of 1880, locating at Hanover, Pa. Pastor of the Second Reformed Church at Hanover from January, 1884, until January 1, 1889. Accepted a call to the Reformed church at Myerstown, where he labored for two years until 1891. At this time a call was extended to him from Brownback's charge, Chester county, which was accepted. Here he continues his ministry at this date.

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Knipe, Jesse B. Son of Frederick and Margaret Knipe, born near North Wales, Pa., September 12, 1804. Baptized June 20, 1805. Confirmed as a member of the Reformed church, April, 1827. His early educational training was such as the ordinary public schools afforded. His theological training was under the supervision and instruction of the sainted Rev. Geo. Wack. Preached his first sermon in Bœhm's Reformed Church, June 10, 1827, while still a student. Licensed and ordained to the gospel ministry, September 30, 1830. Accepted a call from the Pikeland congregation, where he was installed as pastor at the same time. Continued his ministry here until January 16, 1881. Organized St. Paul's, Uwchlan, in 1838, and served it for about fifty years. Organized St. Matthew's, West Vincent, 1833. Beginning with 1850, he served St. Matthew's, West Vincent, with certain interruptions, for about twenty-five years. St. Vincent, also, was served by him as supply for about the

same length of time. Relinquished the active pastorate of his first and only charge in 1881, and performed his last public ministrations in St. John's Reformed Church, Phœnixville, December 23, 1883. Died June 18, 1884, and was buried in Pikeland Reformed cemetery. Father Knipe, like Goldsmith's Village Parson, was a man "to all the country dear." He was simple-hearted, pure and unaffected—a veritable child of nature. Without intermission, in season and out of season, he preached the Word of Life, faithfully and earnestly, to thousands of his fellow men, during these stirring years of Christian activity. A man of peace, simple, quiet, and unostentatious in his habits, whom the scoffer respected and the saint adored. His name is still a household word in hundreds of Christian homes, and his influence will continue to bless generations yet unborn.

* * *

Kremer, Leighton G. Son of Rev. F. W. Kremer, D. D. (deceased). Born at Lebanon, Pa., January 13, 1852. Graduted from Ursinus College, class of '75, and from Union Theological Seminary, New York, in '77. Assisted his father in Lebanon one year. Accepted a call to the Second Reformed Church, Hagerstown, Md., where he labored until 1887. Accepted a call to East Vincent and Spring City charge, January 1, 1888, where he labored up to the time of his death, August 25, 1890.

MAUGER, SILAS P. Born near Basil, Fairfield county, Ohio, July 4, 1847. Attended the common and select schools of the community until he was 19 years of age. Received into church fellowship at Basil, O., September, 1866. Entered preparatory department of Heidelberg University, Tiffin, O., at the age of 19, and graduated in the classical course, June, 1872. Graduated from Theological Seminary of the same institution, April, 1874. Received a call from the Canal Winchester, Ohio, charge, where he was ordained and installed as pastor, April 30, 1874. Pastorate here continued until April 30, 1882. Accepted a call and was installed into the Pikeland and St. Vincent charge, Sunday, November 12, 1882. Preached as supply for St. John's, Phœnixville, beginning December 3, 1882. Afterwards served the reconstructed Phœnixville and Pikeland charge until September 1, 1888, when he resigned to accept a call from the Mt. Bethel charge, Northampton county, where he is at present very acceptably serving two congregations.

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MEMINGER, J. W. Born near Ickesburg, Perry county, Pa., November 9, 1859. Obtained his early education in the public schools and Bloomfield Academy. Began teaching in the public schools at the age of 17. Prepared for college under Prof. J. J. Paterson in the Tuscarora Academy. Graduated from Ursinus College, class of '84, and two years later from the

Theological Seminary at the same place. Also graduated from the National School of Oratory, Philadelphia, '86. Received a call from Brownback's charge, Chester county, where he was ordained and installed, June 20, 1886. On January 5, 1887, received a call to St. Paul's, Lancaster, which he declined. The call was subsequently renewed and he accepted. Entered upon his work there, July, 1887, and is still laboring in this field with great success and general satisfaction.

* * *

Mertz, J. A. Son of Peter and Susanna Mertz, born at Freeburg, Snyder county, Pa., May 26, 1856. Early education was received in the Freeburg Academy. At the age of 15 years, he began to teach in the public schools of his native state, and continued for eight years. Entered Franklin and Marshall College as a freshman in the fall of 1879. In the following Spring, continued the classical course in Heidelberg College, from which he graduated in 1883. Entered the theological department of Ursinus College, from which he graduated in 1887. Ordained and installed as pastor of St. Vincent-Linfield charge, June 12, 1887, where he is still laboring among an earnest and devoted people.

* * *

Rowland, Maxwell S. Pastor of St. Matthew's and East Vincent Reformed Churches, 1869–1881.

Now pastor of the Presbyterian church, Whitesville, N. J.

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Shenkle, A. B. Son of Samuel and Mary Shenkle. Born at Unoinville, Berks county, March 27, 1815. Baptized in the Episcopalian church at Douglassville, Pa. Moved to East Vincent, on the farm now owned by William Latshaw, 1832. Was converted under the influence of the sermon preached by Rev. John C. Guldin from the steps of the East Vincent Reformed Church. The period of the great religious awakening in 1835 fomented so much opposition that the doors of the church were locked against pastor Guldin. In 1836, A. B. Shenkle united with the East Vincent Reformed Church. About this time he felt himself called to the ministry. Through the Rev. J. C. Guldin, then located in Franklin county, a way was opened for him to enter Marshall College at Mercersburg, where he remained from 1841 to 1847. Called to the pastorate of East Vincent and Trappe Reformed Churches in the Fall of 1847. Served the former until October, 1868, and the latter until April, 1867. Also served St. John's, Phœnixville, for a number of years, beginning with 1848. Accepted a call to the Millersville charge, Lancaster county, Pa., in 1869, which he served over ten years. Took charge of the Willow Street Reformed Church in 1877, which he served in connection with the Maytown congregation until 1883. In 1885, Willow Street was constituted a

charge by itself. This he served until March, 1887. Since July 6, 1891, he is pastor of the Marietta charge, Lancaster county, preaching morning and evening. Father Shenkle is now an aged and infirm man. He has done a great work for the church and for the Master. That he hath in earlier years repeatedly encountered opposition, is only saying that he hath trod the path and endured the hardships which all good and positive men must expect to encounter.

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Sorber, William. Born at Flourtown, Montgomery county, Pa., October 4, 1826. Pursued a course of classical and Theological study under the direction of Rev. Jacob Helffenstein, then pastor of Market Square Reformed Church, Germantown. Was licensed by Philadelphia Classis to preach the Gospel in the Spring of 1852. Ordained to the work of the ministry and installed as pastor of the Davidson charge, Davidson county, North Carolina, in the Spring of 1853. Remained in this charge two years, after which he removed North and accepted a call to Brownback's charge, Chester county, Pa., where he commenced his labors, June 24, 1855. His ministry continued until the time of his death, December 7, 1878, a period covering a little more than twenty-three years. Rev. Sorber was to Brownback's charge what Father Knipe was to Pikeland charge and other congregations which he served during his long-continued ministry—an ac-

ceptable preacher, an excellent pastor, a devoted Christian. Through his indefatigable zeal, the scattered and discouraged membership of Brownback's charge was speedily united, and enthused with a common interest in the Lord's work. Many recruits were gathered from the outside into the service of Christ, so that this pastorate became the largest and most fruitful in upper Chester county. He lies buried in the cemetery adjoining Brownback's church, where a beautiful monument has been erected to his memory by a grateful and loving people.

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Sorber, George S. Born at Springfield, Montgomery county, Pa., June 1, 1856. Baptized by the Rev. A. B. Shenkel, and received into the communion of Brownback's Church, April, 1870. Graduated from Ursinus College, class '76, and from the Seminary at the same place in 1878. Special call from Brownback's congregation, to serve in the capacity of assistant to his father, was accepted the same year. Ordained to the sacred office of the ministry October 12, 1878. Called to fill the office of pastor, left vacant through the death of his father, January 1, 1879. Installed into the pastorate July 5, 1879. Labored in this charge with much success and the united support of his people until February 1, 1886, when he resigned to accept an urgent call to Wetsontown, Pa., at which place he is still located, among an earnest and appreciative people.

Staumbaugh, L. Dent. Born at Smith's Station, Pa., January 1, 1851, and is of Dutch (Holland) ancestry. Attended the public schools, State Normal School at Millersville, and afterwards taught three years. Entered Ursinus College and Seminary September, 1875. Took a partial college and full seminary course, graduating in the spring of 1878. Ordained and installed as pastor of St. Matthew's Reformed Church, Chester county, June, 1879, and continued his ministry here for a period of four and one-half years. Served as supply pastor for St. Paul's Reformed Church, Uwchlan, for about eight months. On February 1, 1884, he commenced his pastorate in the Wolmesdorf charge, composed of four congregations, where he has been laboring successfully for over eight years.

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Stubblebine, William H. Born in Philadelphia, December 7, 1867. Attended the public schools until fourteen years of age. Spent three years in business. Was received in Heidelberg Reformed Church, 1883. In the fall of the same year became a student in the private school of George Eastburn, Philadelphia, to prepare for college. Studied two years in the University of Pennsylvania, and graduated from Ursinus College in 1889. Spent the following year at Union Theological Seminary, New York, and returning again to Ursinus Seminary, graduated

from there in 1891. Unanimously called to Shenkel's Reformed Church, where he was ordained and installed as pastor, August 2, 1892.

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THOMPSON, A. R. Born at Clover Creek, Pa., February 10, 1851. Early life spent on the farm, teaching public school, and in the printing office. Educated at Juniata Collegiate Institute and Ursinus College, graduating from the Theological Seminary of the same institution in 1879. Ordained and installed as pastor of the Hummelstown, Pa., charge, which he served from 1879 to 1881. Pastor of St. Paul's Reformed Church, Chester county, 1881 to 1883; of Mt. Bethel, Northampton county, 1883 to 1888; of Rockingham charge, Va., from 1888 to the present time.

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WETTACH, E. D. Born in Green township, Summit county, Ohio, May 5, 1852, and is of Swiss parentage. Attended the village school until he was fifteen years of age. Spent three years in business at Akron, O. Entered the Academy 1870, and graduated from Heidelberg College, Tiffin, O., 1875, and from the Theological Seminary at the same place in 1877. Ordained and installed as pastor of the Sulphur Springs, Ohio, charge, July, 1877. Accepted a call from the Reedsburg, Ohio, charge, July, 1879,

and continued his ministry here until February, 1884. Accepted a call from the St. Matthew's charge, Chester county, Pa., and was installed June, 1884. Resigned the pastorate of this charge October, 1889, and accepted a call from General Synod's Board to Trinity Reformed Mission, Akron, O., where he is now laboring with marked success.

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Wolfinger, A. D. Born at Nockamixon, Bucks county, Pa., March 14, 1864. United with the Reformed church of that place in December, 1880. Received his preliminary education in the schools of his native place, the high school of Sellersville, and the State Normal School at West Chester. Desiring a more thorough preparation for the study of Theology, he entered upon a course of study in Ursinus College, which he completed in the Spring of 1886. Graduated from Theological Seminary at the same place in May, 1888. Received a call from Brownback's charge, Chester county, where he was ordained and installed as pastor, June 3, 1888. Work here characterized by great zeal and earnestness to reach the unsaved. Accepted a call to the Thornville charge, Ohio, where he is laboring among a people by whom he is much esteemed and beloved.

YOST, F. C. · Son of Daniel and Sarah L. Yost. Born at Shamokin, August 6, 1853. Attended the schools of his native place during his early years. Graduated in the Classical course of Ursinus College, class of 1876. Studied Theology at the same institution. Examined and licensed to preach the Gospel by East Susquehana Classis at McEwensville, Pa., May, 1877. Ordained and installed as pastor of the Thornville, O., charge, which he served from November, 1877, to February, 1883. Served as pastor of the First Reformed Church, Milton, 1883–1889. Pastor of St. John's Reformed Church, Phœnixville, since November, 1889.

APPENDIX.

Pastors.	*Churches.*	*Members.*	*Members of S. S.*	*S. S. Officers.*	*S. S. Teachers.*	*Congregational Purposes.*	*Benevolent Purposes.*	*Post Office Address of Pastors*
Henry Hilbish	Brownback's	245	140	6	14	$810	$822	Slonaker, Pa.
I. Calvin Fisher	East Vincent	108	95	8	10	800	323	Kimberton, Pa.
Henry Hilbish	St. Peter's (Warwick)	23	45	4	6	290	52	Slonaker, Pa.
I. Calvin Fisher	St. Peter's (Pikeland)	42	35	6	5	610	78	Kimberton, Pa.
J. Lewis Fluck	St. Matthew's	134	125	7	13	882	2219	Anselma, Pa.
J. A. Mertz	St. Vincent	125	125	8	10	672	122	Linfield, Pa.
J. Lewis Fluck	St. Paul's	108	112	6	11	663	237	Anselma, Pa.
W. H. Stubblebine	Shen'el's	115	125	8	11	1400	90	Pottstown, Pa.
F. C. Yost	St. John's, Phœnixville	142	217	6	13	1100	80	Phœnixville, Pa.
Calvin Derr	First Reformed Church, Spring City	200	190	7	15	3600	748	Spring City, Pa.
Total		1242	1209	66	108	$10827	$5771	